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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
REIGN OF SHAH-AULUM
THE PRESENT EMPEROR OF HINDOSTAUN

By

W. FRANCKLIN

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FOREWORD

It was quite a common practice with the servants of the East India Company during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to write their memoirs or books pertaining to the contemporary situation in India during their tenure of service. W. Francklin's *The History of the Reign of Shah-Aulum, the present Emperor of Hindostaun*, published in London in 1798 is a part of the same practice. Francklin was a Captain in the East India Company's service and a member of the Asiatic Society.

The author was an eye-witness of the pitiable condition of the Moghal Court, confined in its authority to the areas surrounding Delhi, during the reign of Mirza Abdullah Ali Gauhar, Shah Alam II, the shadowy Emperor of India from 1759 till 1794 when he had to seek the protection of East India Company. He died as a British protege in 1806.

The record of these years is a repetition of the fate of the later Mughals who somehow survived for exactly a century and a half after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707.

The book is of special value not only because it describes the plight of the ill-fated, blinded Shah Alam but also because it gives lively pen-portraits of important personages like Safdar-jang, Shujauddaula, Mahadji Sindhia and Begum Sumroo.

As the later Mughals have been generally ignored by students of history, the reprint of Francklin's *History of Shah-Aulum* by the Pustak Kendra, is to be welcomed. It has become increasingly important to study the dark period following the death of the last great Mughal to reconstruct the political, social and economic situation of India in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For such a study the present reprint will be an excellent source material, reliable, authentic and unprejudiced.

To retain the flavour of the original, the spellings of proper names and places have been left unchanged.

—Editors





HISTORY OF THE EMPEROR SHAH-AULUM

CHAPTER I

A Narrative of the principal Occurrences and Revolutions of the Court of SHAIJEHANABAD from the Reign of MAHMUD SHAH

IN the last year of the reign of Mahmud Shah (A. D. 1747) Ahmad Shah*, the king of the Abdallees, invaded Lahooor, which province he claimed by inheritance from Nadir Shah†. Mahmud Shah sent a large army against him under the command of his son, Ahmad Shah, attended by the vizir Cummer-o'deen Cawn, and his son, Mohim ool Mook. The Abdallee was worsted, and obliged to fly to his own country. Cummer-o'deen being slain in this war, his son, Mohim ool Mook, was left Subahdar of the province of Lahooor, and the prince returned to Shahjehanabad. On his arrival at Panneeputt**, he received the news of his father's death, and immediately caused himself to be proclaimed king. He conferred the vizarut on Munsur Allee Cawn, the subahdar of Owd, who constituted Gazooddeen Cawn, buxey of the empire. The new king being arrived at the city, gave himself up to his pleasures, leaving the affairs of state to his vizir, who ruled with absolute authority. The nobles, jealous of his power, and displeased with his administration, formed a conspiracy against him, and resolved to raise Intezamo Dowla†† to the vizarut. The king, who had great cause to be offended at the conduct of his minister towards him, joined in the design. The vizir discovering the storm which was brewing against him, determined to evade it by deposing the king. He accordingly

* Ahmad Shah Doorance, or Abdallee; Shahishahan, (or King of Kings).

† By the treaty made between Nadir Shah and Mahmud Shah, the former was to possess all the countries lying west of the river Attoc, besides the revenues of the provinces of Lahooor, Guzzerat, Multan, and Cabul, on the other side, which were to be collected by the officers of the Hindostaun court.

** Forty-two cose, or 85 miles, from Shahjehanabad.

†† The youngest son of Cummer-o'deen Cawn, and uncle, by the mother's side, to Gazooddeen Cawn.

surrounded the palace suddenly with an armed force; but not being able immediately to effect his attempt, Gazoodeen Cawn, who was the leader of the opposition, and had already levied a considerable force had time to come to the king's rescue. A war ensued, in which after various success, the vizir was at length worsted, and retired into the country of the Jauts, who were his friends. Intezam o' Dowla was now created vizir in the room of Munsur Allee Cawn, and dreading, perhaps, the growing influence of Gazoodeen Cawn, persuaded the king to accept of the mediation of the Jauts in favour of Munsur Allee Cawn, who sued for pardon. This was accordingly granted him, and a khillut, or dress of honour, with a shooakka*, or letter under the privy seal, pardoning his past offences, and confirming him in his subaship, was sent to him from the king. Gazoodeen Cawn resenting that the king should take such a step without his concurrence or knowledge, and at a time when he was near reaping the fruits of his successes, exasperated at the vizir for his ingratitude, and with the Jauts for having interfered, resolved upon revenge. Leaving the pursuit of Munsur Allee Cawn, he invaded the country of the Jauts, and subdued them entirely excepting only a strong fortress which they possessed in the borders of the country adjacent to Acbarabad. As he had no artillery with him, and the place could not be taken without it, unless by famine, Abdul Mejeed Cawn, one of his officers, was dispatched to Shahjehanabad to request that the royal artillery might be sent him; but the vizir refused to part with it, and shut up all the bullocks and elephants within the walls of the palace, to prevent their being seized by force, which was actually intended. Incensed as Gazoodeen Cawn was at this affront, he was not yet in a sufficient capacity to resent it.— Malhar Row, a Marhatta chief, being at that time in the country of the Rajepoots, where he had been employed in reducing their Rajah Jeysing, Gazoodeen Cawn invited him to his assistance; which the Marhatta instantly complied with, being (besides the advantages which must naturally accrue to the Marhatta power from these divisions) strongly urged to take the part of Gazoodeen Cawn, from the hatred which he bore to the Jauts, who had slain his son. He accordingly joined Gazoodeen Cawn with his forces; and a solemn treaty was made between

* When sent by any of the princes, it is called Rukas.

them, Malhar Row swearing to regard Gazooddeen Cawn as his son, and the latter to look upon the Marhatta as his father. Everything being concerted between them, they began their march towards the capital, and were met in the way by the king and vizir, who gave them battle, and were defeated. The conquerors proceeded to the city, whither the king and the vizir had retired, and had shut themselves within the walls of the palace with a few followers, their last, but poor, resource. The chief officers of the city, whom Gazooddeen Cawn's good fortune had made his friends, readily obeyed an order from him to surround the palace till his arrival, when he commanded the wretched king to be deprived of his right, and imprisoned together with his minister. A prince of the name of Azeezoddcen, being the next in descent of the race of Timur, was taken out of the palace, and proclaimed king by the title of Aulumgheer the Second, Gazooddeen Cawn assuming the vizarut. This happened about the month of November 1755.

The new vizir being thoroughly established in his authority, Malhar Row returned to his own country, leaving Junkoojee, one of his generals, and a considerable part of his army, to prevent fresh insurrections, and to collect the revenues assigned as a recompence for his late services.

The king, who was raised to the throne only as an instrument of Gazooddeen Cawn's ambition, was kept by him in a state of the most lavish dependence, being surrounded by the vizir's creatures, and not allowed to stir out without his leave. In order to extricate himself from such a confinement, he privately wrote to the Abdallee, desiring him to come to his assistance. Invitations were sent him at the same time by Munsur Allee Cawn, the Jauts, and the Rohillas. The Abdallee readily embraced an occasion that promised him such evident advantages. An accident happened at the same time that greatly favoured the enterprise. Mohim ool Mook, the subahdar of Lahooor, received a fall from his horse in hunting, which put an end to his life. His begum, a lady of great spirit, had interest enough amongst the chiefs of the province to procure their nomination of her to the subahdarree in the place of her deceased husband.

The affairs of the empire were in this state, when the Abdallee invaded it. The Marhattas were masters of the greatest part of Hindostaun; a nominal king sat on the throne; the administration

was usurped by a man who derived his influence and establishment entirely from a foreign power; the chiefs of the empire had already declared their resolution of joining the invader; and Lahooor, the key of Hindostaun, was governed by a woman.

The Abdallee having marched as far as Lahooor, summoned the princess to surrender; and upon her refusal, besieged the place.—After a very gallant defence, he at length became master of the city and of the princess's person, whom he treated with great respect, bestowed the highest encomiums on her valour and conduct, as well as on the virtues of her late husband; and adopting her formally as his daughter, confirmed her in the subahdarree. He left however a naib with a small force at the city, and proceeded towards Shahjehanabad. The vizir, unable to cope with such an adversary, went out with the king and all the nobles, and met the Abdallee at Panneeputt, from whence he was conducted in great state to Shahjehanabad.

As soon as he had entered the city, letters were dispatched to all the states of the empire; and the vackeels residing at the court were all summoned to pay obedience to the King of Kings, and to deliver a tribute suitable to the income of each several province. All obeyed the summons excepting the Jauts, against whom he resolved to turn his arms. Before he left the city, he removed Gazooddeen Cawn from the vizarut; and leaving the king the choice of his own ministers, that prince constituted his eldest son, Aallee Gowher, naib of the empire, a post equal in power to the vizarut, but differing in the name, in respect to the quality of the possessor.

Leaving a garrison for the defence of the city, and officers to collect the revenues, the Abdallee marched out against the Jauts, who were well prepared for his reception. In two engagements (probably not general) the Jauts had the better. Gazooddeen Cawn, who attended the camp under a guard of Naffuckchees, represented to the Abdallee, that if he would entrust him with the command of the van of his army, he would answer with his life for the success. It is not related what arguments were used to persuade the Abdallee to accept of a proposal seemingly so chimerical and dangerous. It is said he consented; and Gazooddeen Cawn leading the army, attacked the Jauts with success equal to his promises. It is certain that they were entirely defeated, and obliged to shut themselves up within the walls of their

fortress, and to sue for peace; which, upon their submission, and the payment of a large sum of money, was granted. The Abdallee, pleased with the bravery and conduct of Gazooddeen Cawn, resolved to reward his services by restoring him to the vizarut, and wrote to the king his intention, requiring him to comply with it. The king unwilling to displace his own son for the sake of a man whom he hated and feared, remonstrated against such a proceeding. To remonstrate was all he could do; but his haughty patron disdaining an appearance of opposition to his will, immediately sent his Naffuckchees to seize and bring before him the four sons of the king, and seizing the cullumdaun* from Allee Gowher, gave it to Gazooddeen Cawn. The prhices remained with him in the hands of the Naffuckchees. About this time news arrived, that the king of Balkh had invaded the territories of the Abdallee. This obliged him to return home. Leaving therefore Nejeeb Cawn, the Rohilla, who by his recommendation had been appointed buxey of the Empire, with the charge of collecting his revenues, he departed with his army, and an immense treasure, the fruits of his great successes. He had no sooner passed the frontier of Hindostaun, than Gazooddeen Cawn, who now became as absolute as before, of his own authority dissolved the office of collector, which the Abdallee had conferred on Nejeeb Cawn, and deprived him likewise of the buxey-gheecreec, which post he conferred on Ahmud Cawn of the Bungesh race. Najeeb Cawn, upon this quitted the court, and retired to his government at Seharunpore.

The three youngest sons of Aullumgheer, who were enlarged upon the Abdallee's departure, returned to the royal palace: but *Allee Gowher*† not choosing to put himself in the power of his professed enemy, fled to Jedger, his jagheer, and raised forces to defend himself against any attempts upon his person. The vizir entreated him, with professions of the greatest attachment, to return; and the king was compelled to set his hand to the same invitation; but without effect. At length the vizir solemnly swearing upon the Koran, to attempt nothing against his life and person, he submitted and came back to the city. A house without the walls of the palace was allotted him for his present residence; and the vizir

*. The standish, the badge of the vizarut.

† The present Emperor.

frequently solicited him to go and dwell in the palace with his father and the rest of the royal family. But the prince, knowing that the vizir fought only to get him into his power, evaded the snare by various pretences. This artifice failing, the vizir had recourse to violence, and one morning by day break the prince suddenly found himself surrounded by an armed force. With the few attendants and guards which were about his person he stood upon his defence, and repulsed the first attacks; after which the assailants surrounded the palace, waiting either fresh orders, or succour from the vizir. The prince seeing no hopes but in flight, found means to gain over Mehdee Coollee Cawn, who guarded one of the avenues to his palace; and fighting his way through the other guards, made his escape out of the city. Eetal Row, a Marhatta general, lay encamped on the opposite banks of the river Jumna. To him the prince fled for protection, and was kindly received. Eetal Row swearing by the water of the Ganges not to betray him, or deliver him up to the vizir.

The Marhatta continued faithful to his engagements; and notwithstanding the repeated solicitations of the vizir, kept the prince in his camp five or six months.

At length, fearing either a rupture with the vizir, or that he might attempt to surprise the prince whilst he remained so near, he persuaded him to return to Jedger. The prince saw the necessity of taking such a step, and consented. He was accordingly conducted by a strong escort from the Marhatta in that country. Here he continued a few months; but not judging himself safe in such a situation, he accepted of an invitation from Nejeeb Cawn, and repaired to him at Sehaur-pore. Nejeeb Cawn allotted him a monthly income of 50,000 rupces for his expenses; and treated him with all the respect which his birth, and the similarity of their fortunes, naturally demanded from him. He had not forgot the injury which he suffered from Gazooddeen Cawn; and thought he had now a favourable opportunity to resent it. He accordingly sent letters to Seyed Oolla Cawn, Hafiz Rabmut Cawn, Doondee Cawn, and the other Rohilla chiefs, to Rajah Soorujmul, the chief of the Jauts, and Shujaa o' Dowla, inviting them to join him in redressing the cause of the injured prince, and freeing the king from the tyranny of the vizir; but the dread of the Marhattas obliged them to decline engaging in so dangerous

a scheme. Frustated in his designs, and unable to maintain the prince any longer, or to protect him against the vizir, who was actually preparing to send a Marhatta army against him, Nejeb Cawn persuaded him to seek for refuge with the nabob Shujaa o' Dowla. In consequence of this advice, the prince, after a twelve month's residence with Nejeeb Cawn, took leave of him and marched with a slender train to Lucknow. He was received by Shujaa o' Dowla with the greatest honours, and presented with elephants, horses, tents, and all manner of necessaries suitable to his state, with a present (a nezeranna) of 3 lacks of rupees. The power of the vizir was too firmly established, and the Marhatta name too formidable, to admit of the nabob's assisting the prince openly, unsupported as he must be by any other power. To entertain him at his court could answer no end, and must necessarily draw upon himself the resentment of the vizir. All the service he could afford him was to support him privately, and wait a fitter opportunity to act more publickly in his favour. The best expedient, therefore, that immediately occurred, and which promised the surest success, was to attempt the conquest of Bengal. All appearances concurred to favour such a design. The province of Bahar belonged to him as the lawful Subahdar, a prescriptive right of the eldest son of the king. Jaffer Allee Cawn, the Subahdar of Bengal, and actual governor of the three provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, had been raised to that dignity by the assistance of the English, by whose influence alone he continued to possess it. His government was generally disliked. His behaviour had drawn on him the hatred of the greatest part of the country. His Jemadtars, most of whom were once his equals, could not brook the distance with which they were now treated, and were equally obnoxious to him from the little respect which they put on in their behaviour to him. The Seapoys, a numerous rabble, were in arrears even from the pay due to them in the time of Serajah Dowla : the Zemindars of both provinces were ready for a revolt whenever they could do it with safety, and had already appeared in arms against the Nabob in that of Bahar, the revenues of which were insufficient to defray its own current expenses. With these advantages a more powerful argument yet concurred, which was, the name of the prince, and the veneration which the

person of the heir apparent of the empire naturally drew from the subjects of so despotic a state; and which was now heightened by his distress. The conquest of those provinces being thus ensured, would facilitate the attainment of his grand object, the freedom of his father, and the security of his own right to the succession, by the acquisition of so great a revenue, the increase of his force, and the influence this success would give to his name.

Everything being concerted for effecting this enterprise, Shujaa Dowla assisted him with a party of his own forces under the command of his kinsman, Mahmud Coolly Cawn, the Subahdar of Allahabad. The prince solemnly swore to bestow the vizarut upon Shujaa Dowla, whenever he came to the throne, as a reward for his loyalty, and departed.

Towards the conclusion of the year 1758, the prince crossed the Currumnassa*, and entered the province of Bahar; where he was soon joined by a number of malcontents, and the disbanded Seapoys of Jaffer Allee Cawn. The success of his first attempt is too well known to need a particular relation. Repulsed in his attacks upon the city of Patna, and not daring to stand the approach of Colonel Clive, whose name, and the rapidity with which he marched to meet the prince, already seemed to denounce his certain defeat, he retired with precipitation back to the province of Allahabad; whither it was deemed, in the then-unsettled situation of the Nabob's affairs, imprudent to follow him, as a rupture in that case must unavoidably have ensued with Shujaa Dowla. After this disappointment, he made a proposal of throwing himself upon the protection of the English; which was rejected. He therefore remained at Mukkunpoor, on the borders of the province of Allahabad, forsaken by most of his followers, and waiting, without any determined plan, for what a better fortune should throw in his way.

Whilst the prince was pursuing his projects in Bengal, a storm broke out which threatened to overwhelm his ancient friend and protector, Nejeeb Cawn, against whom the vizir sent Junkoojee, the Marhatta general, with a large force. At the same time Dettajee Toppul, another Marhatta chief, was detached against

* A river which divides the province of Bahar from the Zemindaree of Benares.

Lahoor, which he reduced, and drove the Abdallee's Naib out of the country.—Nejeeb Cawn finding himself incapable of any long opposition against so formidable an enemy, called his old allies, Sujaa Dowla, and the Rohilla chiefs, to his assistance; and at the same time solicited the Abdallee to return; who was likewise invited by the other leaders of the same party.

Before his allies could join him, the Marhattas had entered his country. He met them, and gained some inconsiderable advantages over them, sufficient however to gain time till he was strengthened by the junction of his friends, who were already on their march towards him. Junkoojee, fearing lest his enemies should be too powerful for him, and hearing of the arrival of the Abdallee at Lahoor, sent advice to the vizir of his situation, and desired him to come to his assistance. The vizir replied, that he was unable to obey the summons, having no forces with him sufficient to be of any service, nor money to levy others. Junkoojee immediately sent him five lacks, with which the vizir now assembled his people together, and prepared to take the field.

Fearing to leave the king behind him at the city, and suspecting that he had leagued with his enemies, and intended to restore Intezamo Dowla in his absence, he desired the king to accompany him on the expedition, which he refused; and the vizir in consequence resolved to rid himself at once of his fears by putting him to death. This bloody resolution being taken, he affected to be satisfied with the king's excuses, marched out of the city, and encamped a few cose beyond it; where he waited the execution of his plot, which was effected in the following manner :

Ballabassrow, an emissary of the vizir, went to the king, and informed him that a fakeer of great sanctity had taken up his quarters at the tower of Feroz Shah; and partly by persuasion, and partly by force, carried the deluded king to see him, and in the way caused him to be murdered. The vizir having thus accomplished his execrable design, ordered the palace to be plundered and the sons and relations of the deceased monarch to be stripped of all their jewels, which were converted into money for his urgent necessities. Mehdee Collee Cawn and Coja Bussent were left with the charge

of the kella, or fort. The former, by the directions of his master, took a grandson of Cambuksh, the youngest son of Aurengzeeb, out of the palace, and proclaimed him king, by the name of Shahjchan the Second.

The vizir now proceeded towards Junkoojee, and joined him about the same time that Nejeeb Cawn's Rohilla allies were arrived to his assistance; and Nejeeb Cawn reached the borders of Nejeeb Cawn's country, where he met with a detachment of Marhattas that had been sent round to cut off the supplies of provisions coming to the Rohilla camp, and put them to the rout. After this he proposed an accommodation between the contending parties; and a negotiation ensued, which he contrived to protract till the Abdallee were advanced as near as Panneeputt, when the vizir was obliged to march back with precipitation to prevent their seizing the city; and Shuja Dowla, who thought his presence no longer necessary, returned to his province. The vizir caused a strong entrenchment to be thrown across the road leading from Panneeputt to Shahjehanabad, and encamped behind it, wailing the approach of the enemy. In the meantime Dettajee Toppul, whom the Abdallee had lately driven from Lahooor, was detached with part of the army to obstruct the enemy's march, and fell in with the van, commanded by Jehan Cawn, by whom he was attacked, and his army routed, himself being slain in the flight. Jehan Cawn continued his march, whilst the Abdallee, quitting the direct road by the advice of Nejeeb Cawn, turned off to the left, in order to favour the junction of the Rohillas, who were hastening to him through the defiles of Coonpoora. Then passing by the vizir, he suddenly arrived at the capital, of which he took possession without opposition.

The vizir, intimidated by this unexpected stroke, durst not stand the enemy, but fled to Akbarabad. The Abdallee leaving Yacoob Allec Cawn to command in the city, and to put a stop to the disorders committed there by his people, pursued the vizir and cut to pieces many of the Marhattas and Mogul troops in their flight.—From Akbarabad the vizir fled to the Jauts, with whom he had made peace a little before the entrance of the Abdallee. The conquering army continued the pursuit to that city, and, taking possession of it, halted there. The vizir and Junkoojee sent advices of the unhappy turn of their affairs to Malhar Row,

and entreated him to come to their relief ; he instantly obeyed the summons, and marched to them. During this time the Abdallee having recruited his people, left Akbarabad, and advanced towards the enemy, who declined coming to action, and shut themselves within a strong fortress belonging to the Jauts.

Notwithstanding the expected union of Malhar Row, the vizir saw that he should still be in little capacity of withstanding the power of the Abdallee. He, therefore, sent a vaceel to the Rohillas to desire their mediation with the Abdallee for obtaining a peace; and if they approved of the motion, that Hafiz Rohmut Cawn might come and settle the conditions. The Rohillas consented, and sent Hafiz Rahmut Cawn to the vizir. The demands of the Abdallee were limited to two crore* of rupees, which the vizir consented to pay, offering to give thirty lacs upon the spot, and assignments on the country for the remainder. At this interval Malhar Row arrived, and annulled the treaty. Both armies therefore prepared to renew the war. The vizir continued in the fortress, and the Marhattas marched out to meet the Abdallee.—Malhar Row commanded the van of the former Jehan Cawn led on the latter. They met the Marhattas, were defeated, and fled to Jeypore, a country of Rajepoots, governed by Raja Jeysing; the vizir followed.

The season being far advanced, and the Abdallees used to a more northern climate, being unable to sustain the severe heats which now came on, the army returned to Annoopshehr, a place on the borders of Nejeeb Cawn's territories, and not far distant from the capital, where quarters were provided for them by Nejeeb Cawn, on the north-east side of the Jumna. On their way they besieged the fort of Sabitgher, and took it.

From Annoopshehr the Abdallee sent his Nassuckchees with letters to Allee Gowher and Shuja Dowla, offering the throne to the former, and the vizarut to the latter. They arrived first with Shuja Dowla, who dismissed them with letters of his own to the prince, pressing him to seize the occasion, and return to Hindostan.

This prince had, notwithstanding his defeat last year, thought himself in a capacity this to renew his attempts upon the province of Bahar; and being invited by Camgar Cawn, the Zemindar of

* Two million sterling.

Mey, who had lately escaped from imprisonment, and other malcontents, advanced as far as Sasseram, when he heard of his father's tragical end. He immediately caused a throne to be made, and assumed the imperial dignity, taking upon him the name of Shah-Aulum. He wrote to all the potentates of the empire, requiring them to acknowledge his title; and sent a khillut for the vizarut to Shuja Dowla. That Nabob accepted of the honours conferred upon him, struck coins in the name of Shah-Aulum, and wrote to the Abdallee and the Rohillas in behalf of the new king.

Soon after the Nessuckchees arrived at the prince's camp with the letters from the Abdallee and Shuja Dowla. He returned a suitable answer to the former; and to the latter he replied, that after the reduction of Bahar and Bengal, he would return to take possession of the throne; but that he would never depart till he had wiped off the disgrace which his honour had suffered in those provinces.

Shuja Dowla, who waited only to learn the prince's resolutions, as soon as he had received his answer, left him to prosecute his designs on Bengal, and set out with his forces for the camp of the Abdallee, who had sent him repeated summons to attend him. As soon as he was near Annoopshehr, the Abdallee sent towards his own vizir to meet him, and bring him in state to the camp where he was received as the vizir of the new king, and presented in person with a khillut for the purpose.

Malhar Row, after his defeat, had written to Ballajec, representing the necessity of his coming himself in person or sending a large army to retrieve the Marhatta power in Hindostaun. Ballajee was then at war with Salabut Jung, the Subahdar of Deccan, whom he had reduced to great distress. But upon the news of Malhar's ill success, he accepted of a composition from Salabut Jung, who ceded to him a considerable part of the province of Aurungabad; and a peace was concluded between them.

Ballajee being now at liberty to pursue the war with greater vigor in Hindostaun, raised a vast army of 100,000 men, and sent it under the command of his own son, Bisswassrow. His illegitimate brother, Shemsheer Bahader, Sedashewrow, Ibraheem Cawn Gardee, Antajee Mankeser, Appajee, Jeyajee, and Rogojee, were the principal men that attended Bisswassrow. They proceeded directly to the country of the Jauts, and were met by the vizir, Malhar, and the Jauts, on the banks of the river Beea. The river

Jumna, which lay between the two armies, being swelled to a great height by the rains, they were obliged on each side to remain inactive.

During this interval Bisswassrow proposed to the Abdallee a peace upon the same conditions which were formerly made with Nadir Shah. The Abdallee rejected these offers with disdain, and on his part demanded that the Marhattas, whom he reproachfully stiled the Zemindars of Dcccan, should return to their own territories, nor advance beyond the river Nerbudda, which was to be the boundary of their jurisdiction; that his own power should extend as far as Panneeputt and Carnal; and that the revenue of the empire should be collected by the officers of the crown, who should duly pay the Marhattas their chout; in the collection of which the Marhattas should have no concern. As neither side would recede from their own conditions, the negotiations had no other effect than to take up the time which they could not make use of to a better advantage.

The city of Shahjehanabad was still in the hands of Yacoob Allee Cawn, the governor left in it by the Abdallee with only 2000 men, of which about 500 were Abdallees. Bisswassrow no sooner learnt the weak state of the garrison, than he besieged the city, of which he soon became master, and dismissed Yacoob Allee Cawn, without any other injury than stripping him and his people of their effects. He was no sooner master of the city, than he dispossessed all the officers appointed by the vizir, and treated him with so much neglect, that he left the army in disgust, and encamped with a few followers at Carna-pahree, about two cose from the Marhatta camp.

It is probable that at this time they had entered into private engagements with Shuja Dowla, to acknowledge him vizir. He arrived shortly after at the camp of the Abdallee; who, by the advice of the Rohillas, sent him to the Marhattas with fresh proposals of peace; and the Jauts were desired to act as mediators. He was received in the character of vizir, and with marks of friendship, by Bisswassrow; who immediately dismissed Rajah Dileer Sing, Gazooddeen Gawn's vaceel, from his presence and from the camp.—Gazooddeen Cawn being thus rejected by all parties, and deprived of all hopes of redress, retired into the country of the Jauts, who afforded him a subsistence.

The particulars of the negotiation carried on by Shuja Dowla are not well known. Two months were consumed in various conferences, without any nearer prospect of peace. It appears, however, that he was not altogether idle, from what passed during this interval. Each of the powers that sided with the Abdallee were guided by their own separate interests. In one thing they all concurred, which was an universal enmity to Gazooddeen Cawn. Besides this, Shuja Dowla had other material points in view, the success of the cause in which he had engaged with the prince Allee Gowher, and his own confirmation to the vizirat. Gazooddeen Cawn was already removed. The prince's title was publicly acknowledged by the Abdallee: nothing was wanting to establish his authority but the concurrence of the Marhattas. To obtain this seems to have been the business of Shuja Dowla's private conferences with the Marhattas. The result was, that Bisswassrow declared Allee Gowher king, and placed his son on the koorsee*, as regent of the empire, during his father's absence. One condition on which this appointment was made, was a present of five lacs to Bisswassrow, for which the mother of the young prince gave her jewels in pledge to the Marhattas. This step could not but alarm the Abdallee, who was incensed against Shuja Dowla as the promoter of it. Another circumstance which happened presently after, served to add to his suspicion of Shuja Dowla. Coonpoora is a strong fortified city belonging to the Rohillas, situated about seven days journey to the north-west of Shahjehanabad. Abdoosummut Cawn, the Phojdar of Panneeputt, resided here on the part of the Abdabee, and Kootub Cawn on that of the Rohillas. The Marhattas marched against this place, intending to besiege it, and were met by Abdoosummut Cawn, and Kootub Cawn, who gave them battle, but were defeated, and retreated to the city. The Marhattas, without allowing them time to recover from the effects of their defeat, entered the place by storm, and put the garrison and inhabitants to the sword, and became masters of the city, wherein was found an immense booty. The two chiefs were taken prisoners, and sent to Bisswassrow, who slew Abdoosummut Cawn, and imprisoned the Rohilla. The Abdabee no sooner heard of this loss, than he flew into the

* A chair of state.

most violent rage. The river which was still very high preventing him from attacking his enemies, he vented his resentment on Shuja Dowla, whom he accused as a traitor and incendiary, and commanded him to depart from his army. By the intercession of the Rohillas, he was soon prevailed upon to pardon and recall him; but as his fidelity was still suspected, he would not suffer him to encamp within his lines. The loss of a place of so much consequence, and the mortification of seeing his enemy carry on his successes with impunity, determined him upon immediate revenge. He mounted his elephant, and rode directly into the river, resolved to discover if possible some part where it was fordable; but the water, wherever he attempted a passage, rose higher than the elevated trunk of the elephant. Impatient of longer delay, he commanded his army to follow him, and pushing into the midst of the stream, he swam over to the opposite bank. His troops, animated by the example of their leader, did the same, and in a few hours the whole army was safely landed on the other side of the river, with very little loss, which fell chiefly to the share of Shuja Dowla.

As soon as he had ranged his forces in order, he marched without delay to the capital, hoping to seize it before the Marhattas could arrive to its relief; but he found it so well garrisoned, that, having no artillery, he was obliged to desist from the attempt, and turn his attention towards Bisswassrow, who was advancing towards him. They met, and the Marhattas were defeated. It does not appear that this engagement was very decisive. Some accounts even make it terminate in favour of the Marhattas; but this is hardly probable. From this period nothing of consequence happened till the beginning of January. Both armies continued in their encampment. The Abdallee at Sehaleh, four cose east of Panneeputt, and the Marhattas at Segher, close to Panneeputt. About the month of December a reinforcement of 15,000 men joined the Abdallee, and the Marhattas received a supply of treasure, said to be thirty-seven lacks, conducted by an escort of 8,000 men from Deccan. The Marhattas were now so much inferior to the Abdallee and his allies, that they durst not stir from their camps, but kept themselves confined within a strong entrenchment; whilst the Abdallee remained master of the country round them, and cut off all their supplies of provisions.

Dcled Cawn Rohilla, the Zemindar of Coonpoora, the capital of which still remained in possession of the Marhattas, marched into that country, and sacked all the villages, from whence the enemy might receive any supplies; whilst other detachments committed the like ravages in other parts; the Marhattas all the time lying inactive, nor daring to oppose them. They were at length reduced to the greatest straits; their provision was wholly consumed, and the people and cattle daily wasting away by famine. In this distress, which every day rendered more deplorable, Bisswassrow assembled the chiefs, and it was unanimously resolved to trust to the desperate hazard of a battle, rather than thus to perish by hunger. This being determined on, the whole army marched out of the entrenchments, and on the morning of the 14th of January advanced towards the enemy. They were now within two cose of the camp of the Abdallee, when he marched out to receive them. When both armies came in sight of each other, they cannonaded one another till towards noon, when they came to close engagement with their battle-axes. The fight was maintained with great obstinacy, and various success, till towards the close of the day, when the advantage seemed to be on the side of the Marhattas, who had penetrated even to the Abdallee's camp. At this juncture, a body of Fackeers in the service of Shuja Dowla rushed in amongst the foremost of the Marhattas with such intrepidity and success, as gave a turn to the battle. The Marhattas, unable to withstand so fierce a conflict, gave back. The assailants pursued their success, and soon after the rout became universal. Many thousands of the Marhattas were slain in the fight, and in the pursuit, which was continued the next day; and the rest, dispersed about the country, were massacred and plundered by the Zemindars, or escaped and joined by degrees their several commanders. Shemsheer Bahader, and Ibraheem Cawn Gardee, with most of his people, being on foot, were slain. Shedadewrow, the principal officer under Bisswassrow, poisoned his women to prevent their falling into the hands of the conqueror, and fled towards Narnowl in the road to Deccan. Bisswassrow, Malhar Row, Junkojee, and other chiefs of note, are said to have been amongst the slain; but this is not certain. All accounts concur in representing the Abdallee's

victory as complete. Shuja Dowla, to whose bravery and conduct the success was chiefly owing, was honoured by the Abdallee with most signal marks of his approbation. That monarch embraced him after the battle, stiled him in form his son, and caused the victory to be proclaimed and registered in his name. On the 16th of January, by the command of the Abdallee, proper officers were sent by Shuja Dowla and Nejeeb Cawn to take possession of the Marhatta Camp at Segher, and to take an account of the plunder, which was invaluable, consisting of the whole artillery, tents, elephants, horses, camels, and other cattle and baggage, with a vast treasure.

Naroo Sanker, the Marhatta governor or Shahjehanabad, fled the day after the action towards Akbarabad, with all his effects and treasure; the latter of which must have been very considerable, as his government had been a continued scene of rapine and extortion. It is said, that he was stopped in the way by order of Soorujmul the Jaut, stripped of all his ill-gotten wealth, and left to pursue his journey, in equal distress and terror, to Akbarabad. The next day, a detachment sent by Shuja Dowla entered the city, and took possession of the place; and Jehan Cawn, the former Subahdar, who had gained the affections of the people by his moderate and just administration, was expected there shortly in the same capacity. On the 16th, Mirza Bawber, the son of Allee Gowher, rode out, attended by his court, to visit the Abdallee, and congratulated him on his victory.

It will be proper now to take a short sketch of the affairs of Bengal. The prince assembled an immense army, defeated Rajah Ramnarain, who then commanded the forces of Jaffar Ally Cawn in Bahar; but was soon after attacked and worsted by the young Nabob and Major Caillaud. By the advice of Camgar Cawn, he suddenly passed by the young Nabob, and entered the province of Bengal by the passes of the mountains; but was so closely pursued, that despairing of success, he returned by the same road, and without losing time laid close siege to Patna, which was gallantly defended by the English garrison, till the arrival of Captain Knox with a detachment of Europeans and Seapoys, who relieved it. The prince immediately raised the siege and retired to Tekarree, where he passed the rains. The young Nabob and Major Caillaud arrived soon after. Some time was spent in the

pursuit of Khandim Hussein Cawn, Naib of Purnea, who had sided with the prince. But the campaign was put an end to sooner than was intended, by the sudden death of the young Nabob who was struck by lightning. The troops took up their quarters in Patna. In the month of October the Nabob Jaffer Ally Cawn resigned his government to his son-in-law Cossim Ally Cawn, and retired to Calcutta.

After the rains the two armies again took the field. A treaty of peace was set on foot ; but broke off through the means of Camgar Cawn. At length, Major Carnac, who commanded the English forces, marched against the prince on the 15th of January, and attacked and beat him, taking M. Law and the French party prisoners. He pursued the prince very closely for some days, till the latter found himself so streightened, that he offered to throw himself upon the protection of the English, which was accepted ; and on the 8th of January he joined the English camp, and proceeded with them to Patna.

The province of Allahabad, including the district of Corah, estimated at the yearly revenue of twenty-two lacks of rupees, was assigned him in guarantee by the Company ; and, in addition, to render his establishment splendid the British governor, in behalf of the Company, agreed to pay into his majesty's treasury the annual sum of twenty-six lacks of rupees from the revenues of Bengal.—In return for these concessions, Shah-Aulum directed a firmaun to be made out, constituting the English East-India Company perpetual Dewan of the rich and fertile provinces of Bengal, Bahar and Orissa, affording a revenue of three millions sterling.

The city of Allahabad was selected for his majesty's residence, where he kept his court in great splendour.

The provision thus made for Shah-Aulum was certainly ample, and the terms dictated by a spirit of consistent liberality.

Surrounded by his most faithful servants, in the bosom of his family, and under the generous safeguard of the British nation, had Shah-Aulum properly appreciated his situation, he might no doubt have passed the remainder of his days in tranquillity and comfort.

It would appear, however, that this prince's disposition and capacity has been imperfectly understood by his contemporaries.—The early part of his life had been active and enterprising ; and his conduct in extricating himself from the violence of Gazooddeen exhibited a spirit of great gallantry and energy of mind. But weak, effeminate and irresolute, he suffered himself to be wholly ruled by the will of others. Though apparently satisfied in his exterior behaviour, Shah-Aulum, even from the moment of his settlement at Allahabad, sighed in secret for the pleasures of the capital, and was ambitious of re-ascending the throne of his ancestors ; under this impression, he unhappily suffered himself to be buoyed up by the promises of the Marhatta chiefs, and by the unworthy advice of his own counsellors, who, big with the hope of ruling with uncontrolled sway, urged their sovereign to throw off this dependence on the English, assert his own rights, and march to Delhi.

Accordingly, after an unquiet residence of five years at Allahabad, the emperor ventured on an ill-judged rash experiment, which proved a source of incessant misfortune to himself and family ; and which the woeful experience of twenty-six years of anxiety, sorrow and trouble, has but too fatally demonstrated.

Not, however, to anticipate the series of events detailed in the following volume, we proceed to relate the particular circumstances that gave rise to this extraordinary resolution of Shah-Aulum.*

*As ample details of the transactions, from the decease of Mahmud Shah until 1765, have been given by Colonel Dow and Captain Jonathan Scott, the author has deemed it eligible to treat of those events with brevity.

CHAPTER II

SHAH-AULUM resides at ALLAHABAD—NEJEEB-AL-DOWLAH at DELHI—Succinct Account of the MARHATTAS—The MARHATTA invited the King to return to DELHI—Negotiations—King sets out—Arrival at DELHI—

SHAH-AULUM, thus eligibly situated, in the bosom of his family, and surrounded by some of his most faithful servants, might now have secured himself a safe and honourable asylum for the remainder of his days. But it was the misfortune of this prince to be swayed by the counsels of designing persons, who, on the king's return to his capital, foresaw a renewal of their own consequence, and an opportunity afforded for the gratification of their ambitious views.

Buoyed up by the flattering prospect of ascending the throne of Timour, and enjoying the luxury and splendour of the capital, Shah-Aulum was persuaded to listen to the overtures which, about this time, were made him by the Marhatta nation. The power of this nation, though slowly recovering from the effects of the fatal defeat at Panneeputt, was still formidable. Their dominions, in 1770, were bounded on the west by the country of the Rathore Rajpoots ; and to south west, including the fertile province of Guzerat, extended to the Indian Ocean. Their eastern confine touched the extremity of Bahar and Cuttack province, bounded on that side by the Soobanreeka*. On the north by the Chumbul, a large and majestic river which rises in the centrical parts of the Rathore mountains, and, after traversing some of the most fertile parts of Hindostaun, discharges itself into the Jumna on the confines of Binde.

Within this widely-extended circuit were included the ancient kingdoms of Baglana and Beejapore, acquired by the valour of Sevajee, founder of the empire, the provinces of Berar and Bundelcund, Malwah, Cundeish and Guzurat.

*A river which divides Bengal from the Cuttack province.

Poonah, a large and opulent, but unfortified city, distant 100 miles north of Bombay, is the present capital of the Marhatta nation.

In the latter years of the reign of Shah Jehan, *Sewajee*, a noble Marhatta, who drew his lineage from the ancient sovereigns of Deccan, laid the foundation of his country's grandeur. Through a series of bold operations, attended by the uncommon success, he baffled every attempt of the great Aurengzeeb to depress his power; and, during the reign of that prince, he enlarged and extended his territory; and died in the plenitude of his power and sovereign sway over some of the richest provinces in Deccan.* His son and successor, Sambajee was weak and dissolute; but Rajah Sahoo, the third of the family, enjoyed a long and successful reign. Under his auspices the Marhatta leaders, issuing from their strongholds in the mountains, descended into the plains of Hindostaun; and by a succession of rapid and brilliant victories, overwhelmed the tottering fabric of the Mogul power, and shook the throne of Timoor to its foundations.

On the death of Sahoo, the authority of Serajee's family first exhibited symptoms of decline. The great lords of the empire took advantage of the situation of an infant sovereign; and, assuming an independent authority, erected the famous office of *Paishwah*, or Director-general of the affairs of the empire; which, in time, embraced every department of the state, and totally eclipsed the influence of the royal family.

Bajerow Balajee, the first Paishwah, was a man of great abilities. To the bravery of an intrepid soldier and skilful general, he added political sagacity; and after a long and successful administration, had the singular good fortune to transmit his authority unimpaired, and his influence undiminished, to his family and descendants.

A succession of Paishwahs after Bajerow continued to direct the affairs of the Marhatta state, until the middle of the present century. During this period the representative of the royal line of Sevajee, immured within the fortress of Sittarah, exhibited only

* In this brief detail of the Marhatta states, the author has principally followed the interesting reports of the select committee of the house of commons on the first and second Marhatta wars. Mr. Orme's valuable historical fragments have also been consulted occasionally.

the pageant of a sovereign. The idle ceremony of investing each successive Paishwah in his office, the only act of royalty which he was permitted to exercise, served but to render him an object of pity and degradation in the eyes of the prinees of Hindostaun.

The great Jagheerdars, or hereditary landholders, among the Marhattas, possessed on their own estates a kind of sovereign authority ; and the terms by which they held their domains bore striking similarity to the ancient scudal system of many countries in Europe.

In times of war, indeed, when the public exigencies of the state required, these chiefs were obliged not only to furnish their quota toward the general stock, but also to appear in the field at the head of their followers, to defend the great banner of the empire. When the time of that serviee expired, they returned to their Jagheers what they enjoyed in perpetuity, converting the revenues solely to their own use. Nor would they, though frequently called upon by the Paishwah's ministers, consent to any diminution therein.

Conscious of their own strength and internal resources, these hardy chiefs were satisfied with paying a nominal allegiance to the commands of the Paishwah ; and as they increased in numbers became more daring, till at length they threw off the yoke ; and the energy and activity which the first Paishwahs had displayed ceasing, the Jagheerdars established themselves in independence of the court of Poonah.

This so far reduced the influence of the Paishwah family as to give the Marhatta nation the appearance of a great military republic, united by general interests, but divided and distinct in the operation of its various executive branches, in which situation it remains to the present day. At the period now commemorating, Madhoo Row Nerrain held the office of Paishwah at the court of Poonah. By an early application to business, he contrived to uphold his authority against the intrigues of his numerous enemies, and to render his authority respected.

On the other hand, three powerful families in the state were secretly endeavouring to undermine the authority of the Paishwah, and erect their own on its ruin. 1. The family of Bhonselah, rulers of the province of Berar, which they held in jaghire from

Rajah Sahoo. Moodajee Bhonselat at this time ruled over that province, and is well known to the British nation. Allied by blood to the royal family of Sevajee, this chief was considered with the highest respect of the whole Marhatta nation ; and having established his authority on a sound basis, he is looked up to by all parties as a proper counterpoise to the influence and overweening ambition of the court of Poonah. 2. Pillagee Guicawar, or the herdsman, whose ancestors wrested from the Mogul Furrok Seer all the country at the foot of the Balah Ghaut mountains, and from Ahumudabad, the capital of Guzerat, to the port of Damaun on the coast of Conkan. This family (whose jaghire was likewise a grant from Rajah Sahoo) formed an alliance with the British government during the second Marhatta war.* 3. Tookajee Holkar and Madhajee Sindia, who jointly shared the Malwah province.

The Marhatta force when united might amount to 150,000 men, the major part of which being horsemen, were accustomed to a desultory and predatory mode of warfare, entirely destitute of science or discipline, but formidable from their numbers and energetick method of attack. The Marhattas then, as already remarked, having recovered in a great measure the shock sustained in their late defeat, appeared ready to renew their efforts, and interpose in the transactions of the court of Delhi. Three chiefs of note, Tookajee, Sindiah, and Besagee, had for some time past taken a favourable position with a large force to the northward of the river Chumbul, in the vicinity of the town of Futtah Pore. Nujeeb Al Dowla, who had been placed at the head of the administration at Delhi, continued in that situation with great credit to himself and benefit to the state. An able politician, a valorous soldier, and pleasant and affable in his manners and demeanour, he gained the confidence of the Delhians, and his influence was found sufficient to uphold the royal authority in the small portion of authority which it still retained. Nujeeb Al Dowla, who was equally desirous with the king's friends for his majesty to return to Delhi, readily entered into the views of the Marhattas on that head. He had moreover a more forcible argument to inspire him with that resolution. The Jauts, who, notwithstanding their late disaster in the loss of Sooruj Mull, their

*See reports of the select committee, etc.

favourite chief, had made head again under his son and successor, Jowaher Sing, and threatened Delhi with the horrors of a siege. In this critical situation, the minister entered into an alliance with the Marhatta leaders, and in concert with them, invited Shah-Aulum to return to his capital. The Marhattas who had an army consisting of 30,000 horse, if sincere in their professions of meliorating the king's situation, certainly possessed the means, totally independent either of the British or any other nation in Hindostan. But it cannot be denied that their chief aim in uniting with the minister, and a concurrence with the king's inclinations, were not dictated by a generous regard for his interests, but entirely with a view to their own aggrandisement.

They expected when Shah-Aulum, through their assistance, should be established at Delhi, the whole management of affairs would be placed in their hands, and were determined that neither Nujeeb Al Dowla nor any other minister should possess influence in the state. This intention, indeed, appeared manifest throughout the negotiations ; conformably to the characteristic policy of their nation, they instructed their agent to announce to the king the reward they expected for their interference, in the present critical state of affairs, and made a previous, though secret, stipulation for a cession of the provinces of Corah and Allahabad to be delivered over to them for ever.

To these demands, however exorbitant, Shah-Aulum, impatient of his confinement at Allahabad, and eager to set out on his intended journey, yielded a ready assent. Nujeeb Al Dowla, when he wrote at this time to the king, recapitulated the circumstances that led to the present offers of the Marhatta leaders, and earnestly pressed the necessity of his speedy appearance at the capital. "By this step," said he, "the designs of your enemies will be frustrated, and the rebels punished ; and I shall have the singular satisfaction of seeing your majesty, before I die, seated on the throne of your illustrious ancestors, and restored to imperial authority".

A few days after writing the above letter, this able minister, at an advanced age, having laboured under a complication of disorders, expired, to the great detriment of the king's interests, and the general regret of the inhabitants of Delhi, who still continue to speak of his administration in terms of respectful gratitude.

This occurrence, however untoward, made no alteration in the plan laid down ; on the contrary, the king appeared more eager than before to commence his expedition ; and notwithstanding the salutary advice of the English government, the intreaties of the vizir, or the remonstrances of such of his servants who were attached to his real interests, he persisted in his design.

Previous to Shah-Aulum's departure, his minister, Muneez Al Dowlah, who had already made two journeys into Deccan to concert measures with the Marhatta chiefs, was now for the last time sent by the king to Calcutta to demand the approbation of the British government on his intended movement. But here he met with a positive refusal ; convinced of the imprudence of the step his majesty was about to take, the council strongly remonstrated against it ; they told Muneez Al Dowlah that the king was throwing away the substance to grasp a shadow, and sacrificing his solid and substantial interests to the vain and idle gratification of residing in the imperial palace ; they warned him against the impolicy of placing confidence in the Marhattas, the very people whose perfidious conduct and insatiable ambition had already proved so fatal to many of his august family. They finally predicted that the present measure was equally dangerous and destructive to his real benefit, as it would undoubtedly hereafter prove distressing to his recollection. With these sentiments, certainly honourable to themselves, the council of Calcutta dismissed Muneez Al Dowlah. But though the British government declined to sanction the king's departure from their protection, they permitted him to retain in his service some battalions of Seapoys which had been trained and disciplined after the European method, having first, however, withdrawn their own officers. With these and other aids, particularly a large supply from the vizir, and the exertions of the Mogul nobles, Shah-Aulum was enabled in the spring of 1771 to assemble an army of about 16,000 men. At his departure, Shuja Al Dowla, the vizir, presented a magnificent paishcush, or offering, with four lacks of rupees in specie. He likewise, in concert with the commander in chief of the British forces, accompanied his majesty to the frontiers of the Corah province ; when having again renewed their solicitations to detain the king, but without effect, they took their leave.

On the road, intelligence was received of the death of Ahmud Khan Bungeish, the Nawaub of Furookhabad : on which the army

halted, and a message was sent by the king's ministers to the guardians of the infant Nawaub, Muzaffur Jung, to demand the arrears due as paisheush to the royal treasury for several years.

This action, considering the unprotected state of the young Nawaub, was considered as oppressive and unjust; but it was vehemently defended by the ministers, on the principle of his majesty's want of ability to enforce his right until the present period.

Hassam Al Dowlah and other noblemen had a conference with the guardians of the young Nawaub; at which it was agreed that paisheush of four lacs of rupees should be given on the part of Muzaffur Jung; for which he was honoured by his majesty with a khillut, and other marks of distinction; and a patent was directed to be issued from the eliancerry office, confirming him Nawaub of the district.

The periodical rains being now set in, the king ordered his army to canton at Nabbe Gunje, a town thirty miles west of Furookabad, and in the high road to Delhi. At this place Anant Row, a Marhatta vakeel, waited the arrival of the royal army. He was charged with the following propositions for the king's consideration:

1. That whatever balance of *Chout** was due from the crown to the Paishwah family since the time of Mahmud Shah, should be faithfully discharged. That whatever plunder might be acquired during the war should be equally divided between the Marhattas and the Mogul troops.

2. That on the king's arrival at Delhi, the Marhatta leaders should be confirmed in the possession of their respective jagheers: and, finally, for the purpose of carrying on the war against the Jauts and others, the sum of five lacs of rupees should be immediately advanced from the king's treasury.

These proposals, at a time when his majesty was so near his capital, caused him extreme disgust. He perceived too well the arrogant spirit by which they were dictated; but conscious of his own inability to resist or evade the fullest compliance, he acquiesced in the demand. The vakeel was graciously received; and a

* The Chout is the tribute imposed by the Marhattas upon every part of Hindostan that came under their authority since their first irruptions. It signifies one fourth part of the net revenue of any state or province.

few days after the Nawaub Mujud Al Dowla and several of the nobility arrived in the camp from Delhi, to visit and congratulate his majesty on his approach. They brought with them from the Marhatta chiefs a variety of costly presents ; and many soldiers of fortune and adventurers having joined the royal standard, the court exhibited a gay and splendid appearance.

The arrival of the Marhatta chiefs enhanced the general satisfaction ; and on a day appointed, Sindiah, Holkar, and Beesajee, were introduced into the king's presence, and received with marks of distinguished respect.

Everything being now settled, the army continued its march ; and on the 25th of December, 1771, Shah-Aulum made his entry into the capital with much pomp and splendour, and amidst the acclamations of all ranks of people.

CHAPTER III

Proceedings against ZABITA KHAN—The MARHATTAS refuse to divide the Plunder—NUJUFF KHAN in high Favour—He quarrels with the MARHATTAS & His Defeat—Pardoned—Cession of GORAI and ALLAHABAD to the MARHATTAS—SHUJA AL DOWLA marches against the MARHATTAS—MARHATTAS retire to DECCAN.

THE first object to which Shah-Aulum directed his attention after a few days repose, was the punishment of Zabita Khan, son to the late minister, Nujeeb Al Dowlah. At the time of his father's death, this nobleman resided at Sehaurunpore, the capital of the province of the same name.

This province, situated in the upper parts of the Dooab*, in the vicinity of the *Sewalick* hills, in the latitude of 28-29 N. long. 77.50. W. and about 70 miles East of Delhi, was the jagheer bestowed upon Nejeeb Al Dowlah, as a reward for the many services rendered by him to the state. It commences under the Sewalick hills, and is bounded on the north by the fortress of Ghose Ghur, east by Sakertaul on the Ganges; west by the Pur-gannah of Seamlee; and south by the town of Meerut. The soil is fertile and luxurious, producing grain, sugarcane, and tobacco, in the greatest abundance; and until injured by the various internal commotions which occurred during the turbulent reigns of Aurengzeeb's successors, it was esteemed one of the most fertile parts of the empire.

Zabita Khan, not equally inclined to support the royal cause as his father had been, deemed the confused state of the king's affairs a fit opportunity to facilitate his own ambitious views; and scarce had his father expired, when he applied himself to raising troops, who were chiefly Afghans of his own tribe, and in fortifying the strongholds in his district. Among these was the post of Sakertaul, situated fifty miles from the capital, on the western

* The country lying betwixt the rivers Ganges and Jumna.

bank of the Ganges. This place was selected by Zabita Khan as the most eligible to make an advantageous stand. He threw up strong entrenchments; and having assembled a numerous body of veteran Rohillas, resolved to wait the attack of the royal army, now on the way to punish his rebellion.

The King commanded in person, and under him was the Nawaub Mirza Nujuff Khan, who began about this time to be noticed with marks of particular regard by his majesty, which was the foundation of his future power. The Marhatta forces were sent on as an advance guard, and the king and Nujuff Khan followed with the remainder of the troops.

Intelligence of the approach of the royal army being conveyed to Zabita Khan, he thought it better, by making a spirited effort to overcome his enemies in the field, than waiting behind his entrenchments. He accordingly advanced a few miles in front of his camp, and offered battle to the king's troops. The contest was bloody, and for some time doubtful; the rebel chiefs, Sadut Khan and Syud Khan, led on their troops with great spirit; but the former being unfortunately slain by a cannon ball, the Rohillas, dispirited at that event, began to give way. Zabita Khan perceiving the disaster, ordered a retreat, and was soon compelled to leave the field of battle with precipitation. The Marhatta horse, advancing with great rapidity, commenced the pursuit of the flying enemy on all sides, and entering camp along with the fugitives, they soon got possession of it, which rendered their victory complete. In the camp they found a fine park of artillery, together with an immense plunder of money stores, and valuable effects of every kind; and the whole of the family of Zabita Khan were made prisoners.

This first essay augured favourably for the success of his majesty's arms; but the avarice exhibited by the Marhattas in the moment of victory caused great discontents among the king's troops, and laid the seeds of internal discord and animosity. Notwithstanding the stipulations already recorded, which were entered into at Nubbce Gunj, the Marhattas appropriated the greatest part of the spoil taken on this occasion to their own use. They secured the whole of the treasure, amounting to a crore of rupces, without offering to make the smallest distribution with their gallant colleagues. The king, incensed at this conduct,

complained of it with warmth to the Marhatta leaders, but without effect. He found their present influence too great to be set aside, and therefore dissembled; but the Mogul nobility nourished a secret hatred against them, which they resolved to make manifest on the first opportunity that was afforded them.

Meanwhile the army advanced, and took possession of Schaurunpore, together with other strong places in the neighbourhood, so that, excepting the fort of Ghose Ghur, the whole of the province acknowledged the king's authority. The family of Zabita Khan, who had been taken in his camp, were by order of Shah-Aulum set at liberty, and sent with a strong escort to the fort of Ghose Ghur, it being an inviolable maxim throughout Hindostan, and in general most religiously observed, to respect the honour of the Haram.*

Having appointed a person to command in Schaurunpore, and settled the affairs of the province, Shah-Aulum returned with the army to Delhi.

The conduct of the Marhatta chiefs in refusing to make a fair distribution of the spoil acquired by the late victory, made a deep impression on the mind of Shah-Aulum. The presence of persons who had insulted his authority was irksome to him ; and, in order to be released from the restraint which they imposed, he requested them to march their forces against the Jauts, who had again assembled in arms under the command of their chief, Rajah Nuwil Sing. The Marhattas obeyed the order, and departed ; but had not been gone many days, when the king received authentic information that they were in league with the rebel, Zabita Khan, who had cajoled them into his view, and were actually on the point of concluding a treaty with that nobleman.

Shah-Aulum, determined to make one effort to destroy their iniquitous cabals, asked advice from Nujuff Khan. He proposed to augment the Mogul army, and to raise new levies with all possible expedition. The king, who knew his ability, and was convinced of his attachment, relied entirely on his exertions ; and to give proof of his confidence, he publicly bestowed on him the office of Paymaster General of his forces.

Nujuff Khan in a short time assembled a considerable body of troops ; and to animate their zeal on the occasion, he declared

* The Haram signifies any females of the family, whatever may be their rank or condition.

it was for the sole purpose of protecting the person of his majesty against the insolent menaces of the Marhatta chiefs.

These precautions were sufficiently justified by the conduct of the Marhattas, who, on their arrival in the country of the Jauts, instead of prosecuting the war, were employed in settling the terms of a treaty with Zabita Khan. On the arrival of that chief in their camp, it was stipulated that, on his advancing a large sum of money, they would return to Delhi, and on their arrival, in concert with him, insist not only on a pardon for his offences, but the investiture of the office of Ameer Al Omrah*, which his father had enjoyed. Conformably to this agreement they struck their tents, and marched towards Delhi. When arrived in the neighbourhood of that city, they sent a messenger to his majesty to require his compliance with the demands aforementioned ; but Shah-Aulum relying on the attachment of the Mogul troops, and the fidelity of Nujuff Khan, assumed a bolder tone, and dismissed the messenger with a positive refusal.

Meanwhile the minister by the king's order led out his troops to battle. He took post near the monument of a Mahomedan devotee without the walls of the city, opposite the gate called Ajmere. His army was well appointed, having a numerous artillery commanded by a French officer. The Marhattas, who outnumbered their opponents, were confident of success, and the attack commenced with great fury on both sides, but an accident which happened to Nujuff Khan, by the blowing up of an ammunition waggon, and which caused a considerable loss among his troops, turned the fortune of the day in favour of the enemy, and with great difficulty the minister was enabled to draw off a part of his army under shelter of a slight entrenchment thrown up in haste by the French commandant of artillery. The Marhattas disliking to attack the entrenchment, suddenly wheeled off and attacked the gate of the city which was near them, hoping to carry it ; but Hussam Al Dowlah, who was stationed in that place, repulsed them with great intrepidity, till finding they could not effect their purpose, they suddenly withdrew their army, and retired to a small distance from the city.

From the issue of the preceding day, the king saw too plainly he could not hope to prolong the contest ; and, at a consultation which he held with his Mogul officers, they with reluctance advised

* Chief of the nobility, an office of the highest rank in Hindostan.

him to accommodate matters with the enemy, and a negotiation accordingly commenced. The Marhattas were again invited to court, whether they repaired the ensuing morning, accompanied by Zabita Khan, who was pardoned, and moreover gratified with a khillut, reinstated in his government of Sehaurunpore, and finally, appointed to the long-expended office of Ameer Al Omrah. It has been judged by many that these concessions so degrading to the king, were not wholly occasioned by his inability to resist, but partly from the intrigues of Hussam Al Dowlah, who, though he had behaved gallantly in the late attack, was known to be in the interest of the Marhattas. Their triumph was now complete ; and to establish it in the eyes of all Hindostan, they asked and obtained from his majesty *sunnuds** for the province of Corah and Allalabad, which had by a solemn treaty already been granted to the English.

Though Shah-Aulum acceded to this degradation with indignation and disgust, rigid impartiality demands that to his own weakness, effeminacy, and indolence, be ascribed the real causes of his disgrace. His total want of energy in judging for himself, made him always a ready and easy prey to the designs of the insolent or ambitious. Hussam Al Dowla, who had long been the personal enemy of Nujuff Khan, took this opportunity of persecuting that nobleman to the utmost. Supported by the Marhatta chiefs, he publicly accused Nujuff Khan as the sole adviser of the late pernicious measures in effecting a breach betwixt his majesty and his faithful adherents the Marhattas, and, that owing to his councils, the affairs of the state had fallen into disorder ; he insist therefore on his immediate execution. The king, though well convinced of the attachment of Nujuff Khan, was incapable of affording him any protection at the present juncture ; being entirely at the disposal of the triumphant party, he would therefore have fallen a victim to the malice of his enemies, had not his own resolute spirit rescued him.

When the aforementioned negotiation commenced, Nujuff Khan, who foresaw the gathering storm, had retired prudently to his own palace ; there, animated by a generous indignation at the unworthy treatment he had received, he collected his friends and dependants around him, and these to the number of 3,000, deter-

* A grant.

mined with their lord to share his fortunes. Instigated by Hussam Al Dowla, the Marhatta forces were ordered to assault Nujuff Khan in his palace ; the affair began to wear a very serious aspect, as from the known bravery of the general, he could not be taken without a desperate resistance and much bloodshed. This, however, was prevented by the interference of Trojakee Holkar ; admiring the intrepidity of Nujuff Khan, and ashamed of the part his countrymen were acting, this generous chief offered his mediation, which was accepted, and Nujuff Khan directed to repair to court in order to receive his pardon. Accordingly, still attended by his faithful adherents, who refused to quit him, he repaired to the imperial palace, where he was graciously received by his majesty, honoured with a khillut, and appointed to command of the army. For this last favour, he was indebted more to the complexion of affairs than the inclinations of his enemies.

During the late commotions within the province of Delhi, others of a very serious nature had arisen from an opposite quarter. The Rohillas were on the eve of a memorable contest, in which the interests of the Vizir Shuja Dowla, as likewise those of the king, were materially involved. The Marhattas, who during the two preceding years had committed every species of violence and oppression, laying waste the countries through which they passed, and insulting the inhabitants, had, among other places, made irruptions into the fine province of Rohilcund, and by a barbarous species of warfare in destroying the produce of the country, excited in that warlike tribe a just indignation. Not being of themselves sufficiently numerous to resist the enemy, they applied to the vizir for assistance, who, in concurrence with the commander-in-chief of the British forces, agreed to unite and expel the invaders. Hafiz Rehumut Khan, chief of the tribe, on this occasion, formed a treaty with the vizir and the English, in which he agreed, in return for the assistance offered, to pay at the end of the war the sum of forty lacks of rupees to the vizir. In these transactions, Shah-Aulum had secretly borne a considerable part. Pending the treaty, he had privately consulted with the agents of the vizir, and had moreover informed the British government* it was now as much his earnest desire to be rid of the thraldom in which he was kept by the Marhattas, as he had before been

* See select reports, *passim*.

partial to them. He added, likewise, that every exertion should be made on his part to counteract their designs by constantly giving intimation of their intended movements.

In consequence of these engagements, the forces of Shuja Al Dowla, accompanied by the English brigades, joined the Rohilla army, who were stationed on the frontiers. Previous to this event, a very large Marhatta army commanded by Holkar and Besajee had crossed the Ganges, and laid waste great part of the country; they were however soon repulsed and driven back across the river with the utmost precipitation. The remainder of the Marhatta army under Sindiah, attended by Nujuff Khan, who, as already mentioned, had been reinstated in his appointment, now arrived, but finding the ill success of their associates, and observing the countenance of the British troops, they held a consultation upon their future operations. Finding the situation of affairs hostile to their views, and knowing the king's mind was now entirely estranged from them, they resolved for the present to return to Deccan, determined to renew their ambitious schemes as opportunity should offer. Agreeably to this resolve, Sindiah and Holkar first, and Besajee afterwards, withdrew their respective troops, and taking the route to Jypore, quitted Hindostan. Nujuff Khan returned to Delhi with the Mogul troops.

CHAPTER IV.

Administration of NUJUFF KHAN—Conquest in the JAUT Country—Rupture betwixt SHUJA AL DOWLA and the ROHILLAS—Reduction of ROHILCUND—Description of that Country—Death of SHUJA DOWLA—Account of the OUDE Family.

THE retreat of the Marhattas afforded Shah-Aulum the highest satisfaction : freed from the vexations occasioned by their insolent demeanour, he hoped he should once more be enabled to maintain his authority in the state, and bring his affairs into a better train.—He was resolved to place his whole confidence on Mirza Nujuff Khan, who in every respect was well qualified for the important trust. High spirited, and an active, equally a valiant commander, as of courteous and obliging manners, he conciliated the esteem of every one ; and by his unremitting attention to business, he preserved regularity, and restored order throughout every department.

The king, to give public proof of his opinion of this nobleman's attachment, thought proper, as a preliminary step, to dismiss his rival, Hassam Al Dowlah, from all his employments. His majesty had long beheld the predilection which that minister had entertained for the Marhattas, whose interests he had dared to prefer to those of his lawful sovereign ; and resolved to punish him for his presumption. He was degraded from his nobility, all his estates confiscated to the royal treasury. His appointments were conferred on Nujuff Khan, who was at the same time created Captain General of the forces of the empire, and dignified with other titles.*

The treasures taken from Hassam Al Dowla, which had been amassed by oppressive means, afforded a fund sufficient to answer the expenses of a war with the Jauts, who, during the late disputes

* His titles at length were, Khan Sipahi Sillar Hindostaun, Rustum Al Dowla, Rustumi Hind, Zulficar Al Dowla, Mirza Nujuff Khan Behadur, Ghalib Jung!—In English thus :

Leader of the armies of Hindostaun, Splendour of the State, Rustum of India, Sword of the Empire, Mirza Nujuff Khan victorious in battle.

at court, had again made head, and were exciting fresh disturbances in order to embarrass the king's government.

About this time, Mujud Al Dowla, a nobleman of considerable eminence, was appointed to the office of Dewaun* : and the king, to encourage his army, caused it to be signified to the troops that the plunder acquired during the intended expedition, should be divided amongst them.

The country of the Jauts, so frequently mentioned, is situated on both sides of the river Jumna, and comprehends a tract of 150 miles in length, by about 60 in breadth. It extends from the vicinity of Gwalior, a large town 60 miles westward of Agra, to the skirts of the capital ; and contains within its limits many strong fortresses and other holds. Towards the close of the reign of Aurengzeeb, this singular tribe first attracted notice. Emigrating from a remote spot on the banks of the Indus, in the lower parts of the Moultan province, and accustomed to the humble occupations of husbandry, they were allowed to settle themselves peaceably in their present residence. In the course of a few years becoming numerous, they ventured to attack the caravans proceeding to Delhi with supplies for the royal army ; and having met unexpected success on their first attempts, at length became so formidable as to require the presence of the imperial troops to overawe them.

Their future progress was inconceivably rapid ; and amid the civil wars carried on by Aurungzeeb's successors, the Jauts found means to secure a large portion of country to themselves, in which they built forts, and accumulated great wealth. Their natural propensity to plunder, which accompanied them in their emigration, has communicated itself to their posterity, and they are still a most notorious and daring banditti.

Chura Mun, one of their first chiefs, was an intrepid soldier, and remarkably fortunate in his encounters with imperial troops, who were frequently compelled to retire with precipitation before this daring tribe. In later times, Suruj Mull, who fell in an ambuscade a few years since, was one of the most respectable of their leaders. He, in 1756, having been dignified with the

* Collector of the revenues.

title of Rajah, or Prince, kept his court with great splendour. But with his death their power, in a great measure, expired. His eldest son, Nuwil Sing, who now commanded the tribe, was not equal to contend with the ability of Nujuff Khan; but being a man of great personal courage, he determined to risk the issue; and for this purpose, besides augmenting his army, he had fortified in the strongest manner the towns of Deig, Bullum Ghur, and other places within his jurisdiction.

Zulficar Al Dowla having received his instructions from the king, put his troops in motion, and marched towards the Jauts. In his way he reduced several refractory Zemindars, whom the late disturbances at court had tempted to revolt from their allegiance. On these he imposed heavy fines, and by this means enriched his treasury to a considerable amount. In the meantime the Jaut Rajah hearing of the success of the captain general, was fearful he might make an attack upon the fort of Deig, one of his strongest holds, which, if successful, would undoubtedly put an end to the war, and prove utter destruction to his affairs. To prevent this, he resolved to hazard an action; and, agreeably to his determination, threw himself in the way of the royal army. A sharp engagement ensued; but Nujuff Khan's good fortune prevailing, the Jaut Rajah was totally defeated, and compelled to quit the field of battle with very few of his soldiers. He took refuge in the fort of Deig, which he resolved to defend to the last extremity.

The plunder of Nuwil Sing's camp, which was immense, prevented an immediate pursuit: and Nujuff Khan, elate with his victory, sent an account of it to Delhi without delay. The news of success, so important, was received at court with the highest satisfaction; and rewards and honours were conferred on the captain general and his army by the king's express command. He sent the general a letter of thanks, written with his own hand, and recommended a vigorous pursuit of the enemy, which it was hoped would bring the contest to a speedy and favourable issue. From the field of battle, Nujuff Khan led the army to Agrah, which place he invested on all sides; but not having a sufficient train of artillery, he was compelled to turn the siege into a blockade, which, indeed, is the more general method adopted by the armies of Hindostaun.

During the siege, he sent detachments to different parts of the surrounding country, by which means, several of the refractory Zemindars were induced to submit themselves to the king's authority.

About this time, the Vizir Shuja Al Dowla, advanced into the Doo Ab with a considerable army. That prince, whose ambition was great; deeming the retreat of the Marhattas favourable to his designs, resolved to appropriate some of their possessions to his own use. He accordingly laid siege to Etawah, a city on the frontiers, from whence he expelled the Marhattas, and placed a garrison therein on his own part. From Etawah he proceeded to Agrah, then besieged by Nujuff Khan, whom he assisted with an increase of force, and several fine cannon, which enabled the captain general to carry on the siege with vigour. The garrison, threatened by a dearth of provisions, were, without difficulty, persuaded to capitulate, and accordingly delivered up the fort and its dependencies to Nujuff Khan. A messenger was immediately dispatched to the capital with the important intelligence, and carried with him the keys of the fort to be laid at his majesty's feet.

Shuja Al Dowla at the same time sent Illuj Khan his favourite, to wait on the king, and, in his name, compliment him on the late successes. But that nobleman was charged with a secret commission of a more important nature. It was to engage the king's consent to the designs which he now meditated against the Rohillas, and, in the event of conquest, to participate with his majesty in sharing the country between them. The jealousy with which the vizir had long beheld the Rohilla power, and his alarm at the extension of their influence, so contiguous to his own dominions, determined him, though contrary to strict justice and sound policy, to quarrel with that nation; and, that a pretext might not be wanting in his favour, he urged the infraction of the late treaty, and complained loudly of the treacherous conduct of the Rohillas in delaying payment of the stipulated sum.

The violation of a treaty made under such circumstances, and by which the Rohillas had certainly received material assistance in the expulsion of the invaders of their country, cannot indeed be justified by any principle of common honesty, though at the same time the inordinate ambition of the vizir, and his enterprising

spirit; were grounds of alarm; sufficient to persuade the Rohilla Sirdars to counteract and curb it by any means within their power. Illuj Khan, on his arrival at court, consulted with Mujud Al Dowla on the foregoing points; and, as he brought a large sum of money with him, he found less difficulty in succeeding in his object. A secret treaty was at length formed, by which the vizir bound himself not only to defray the expenses of the war, but, at its conclusion, his majesty should participate in the distribution of the plunder as well as a share in the conquered province, or, if more agreeable, have an equal proportion of country more contiguous to Delhi. On the part of the king, he was to send the army under Nujuff Khan to the assistance of the vizir, who was preparing, in concert with the British forces, to take the field. Shah-Aulum appeared to listen to their proposals with much complacency; yet, as an ingenious historian* has justly remarked, he did not heartily concur in the measure, being averse to aggrandising the vizir at the expense of the Rohillas. Whatever were his real sentiments, the captain-general was recalled from Agra, and directed to march the army towards Rohilkund, and the king prepared to take the field; but indisposition, whether real or pretended, prevented him from attending the army, which set out under the command of Nujuff Khan.

The memorable battle of Cutterah, and the termination of the Rohilla war which soon followed, are too well known to require any comment in these transactions; it may however gratify curiosity to take a view of the then situation, soil, climate, and productions, of that celebrated province.

Rohilkund, called in Sanscrit *Cuttair*, comprehends that tract lying east of the Ganges, between the 28th and 30th degrees of north latitude, and from 76° to 80° longitude. Commencing in the vicinity of Loll Dong, at the foot of the Kumriow Hills, it extends eastwards to the town of Pillibet; on the north and west, it is bounded by the Ganges, and to the south, by the district of Mahomedy, in the dominions of Oude.

The soil of Cuttair is in general a rich black mould; intermixed in many parts with sand and red earth; it is uncommonly fertile, and capable of the highest cultivation, abounding in all sorts of

* Captain Jonathan Scott.

grain, sugar-cane, and tobacco. Few countries have, in truth, more natural advantages than this ; it is well supplied with several large rivers, besides numerous smaller streams. Among the first, are the Ramgonga, and Dewah, (or Gambera.)

The Ramgonga, taking its rise between the first and second range of mountains to the north-east, issues forth into the plains of Hindostaun at the Gout of Golly ; and after traversing the greatest part of Rohilcund, in a south and south-westerly direction, and fertilizing the lands, is joined in its progress by other rivers, and finally, discharged into the Ganges in the vicinity of Kinnouj. This majestic river, until late years imperfectly known, is navigable for seven months in the year ; its stream is broad and rapid, and its banks are adorned with many large and populous villages. On the eastern side, the Dewah issuing from the same mountains, runs by the town of Pillibcet. Here are embarked the finest Saul, Sissoo, and fir timbers, the produce of the neighbouring forests that skirt the foot of the Kummow hills. At the city of Shahjehanpore, the Dewah joins the Gamberah, whose name it assumes, and after washing the towns of Sandy, Beroun, and other places, meets the Ramgonga near its junction with the Ganges. The smaller streams are the Cossillah, Nahul, Byghul, Dakra, Bukrah, Beefrah, and Yarwufadar ; these likewise contribute highly to the cultivation of the country, and by means of reservoirs, sluices, canals and aqueducts, disperse their waters throughout the corn fields in every direction, but more particularly so in the jagheer of the late Fyzoolah Khan.

Another property peculiar to Cuttair, is the facility with which water is procured ; exclusive of the rivers and streams before enumerated, the soil is such, that by digging a few feet from the surface of the earth in any part of the country, water is procured in abundance.

So happily situated by nature, Rohilcund has in all times been deemed of great political importance. In the early times of the empire, commerce flourished. The great cities of Shahabad, Shahjehanpore, Bareilly, Bissowlee, Bedaon, Owlah, Mooradabad and Sumbul, formerly kept up a constant intercourse with caravans of the north. By them were exported into Cuttair, the products of Lahoo, Cabul, Cashmire, Candahar and Persia, rubies, precious stones, tuteneage, copper, iron, tin, lead, borax,

drugs, Cashmerian shawls, Carmanian wool, mules, horses and camels ; in return they received coarse cloths, sugar, grain and tobacco.

During the reign of the Patan Dynasty in Hindostan, many princes of that family kept their courts for a series of years in the ancient city of Bedaon. There, as in many parts of Cuttair, are to be seen the remains of magnificent edifices, palaces, gardens, mosques, colleges and mausoleums. Among the first-rate cities of modern days are to be placed, Owlah, Bissowlee, Bareilly and Pillibeet, which having been the residences of those Rohilla chiefs who founded a new empire in Cuttair within half a century back, demand on this occasion particular attention.

The city of Owlah, situated in the centre, and in one of the finest parts of Rohilkund, is built on an eminence, having a commanding view of the adjacent country. The river *Nuwaub Nuddi* runs along the south-western side of the city. The town is of considerable extent, and adorned with many handsome buildings, most of which are now in ruins. Enough however remains to discover the former grandeur of the place, and to regret the fatal ravages of destructive ambition. On the summit of the eminence is the fort built of brick. It was erected about fifty years since by Ali Mahomed, founder of the Rohilla government in Cuttair, and here he kept his court. Within the fort is the palace of Ali Mahomed, a cathedral, and several other public buildings. In the environs of Owlah are ruins of palaces, gardens and mosques ; the adjacent country is by nature beautiful, but the total want of cultivation renders melancholy the prospect. Owlah is sixteen miles N.W. of Bareilly, from Bissowlee fourteen, and about equal distant from Delhi and Pillibeet. At Bissowlee are likewise to be seen evident traces of the former splendour of the Rohilla government ; and it is moreover remarkable for being the burial place of several of the family of Ali Mahomed.

Bareilly, situated on the banks of the united streams of Jooah and Sunkra, is a large, handsome, well-built city. It was the capital of Hafiz Rehumut, and a place of considerable trade. It is distant from Lucknow 180 miles, and from the Ganges 120.— Lastly, the town of Pillibeet. This place, thirty-six miles to the north-east of Bareilly, was peculiarly selected by the discriminative foresight of Hafiz Rehumat Khan, as of great importance in its

commercial resources. For the encouragement of trade that prince built a spacious Shehr Punnah, or Pettah, which is four miles in circumference. It is surrounded by a brick wall, and within the enclosure is erected a magnificent mosque. Admirably situated on the banks of the Dewali, Pillibet, during the Rohilla government, was an emporium of commerce. Its staples are Saul, Sessoo, and fir timbers, sugars, and coarse cloths ; and from the mountains of Almorah are imported borax, pitch, drugs, wax, and honey : of late years, however, it is melancholy to add, the hand of commerce is shrunk up, and the want of a well-regulated police, the total discouragement to industry, and the vexatious imports levied by the rulers have almost annihilated its once-profitable and flourishing trade.

The revenues of Cuttair are stated, in the imperial register at Delhi, to be five millions sterling. During the flourishing times of the empire, the face of the country will warrant the supposition, and under the Rohilla government, who paid unremitting attention to agriculture, the province might have yielded that sum. After the conquest of Rohilkund by Shuja Dowla, an offer was made to that prince to rent the province for two millions. Since that period the revenues, from a variety of causes, have continued to decline ; and under the present government, the province of Cuttair with difficulty yields the sum of 36 lacs, or about 400,000 sterling.

Of the inhabitants there yet remains to speak. The Rohillas*, who, it is well known, originally emigrated from the mountains of Afghanistan, about 60 years since, settled in Cuttair. They are a hardy warlike race, equally capable of arms and husbandry. Their feudal system of government, similar to those of Europe in former days, has inspired them with ideas of turbulence and ferocity ; at the same time they are uncommonly patient under hardships, and attached to their chiefs by indissoluble bonds of national affection. But withal, in common with other Afghans, they are crafty, treacherous, and revengeful. This characteristic national spirit, aided by the impetuous sallies of a ferocious and uncivilized mind, renders difficult the government of this race. Hence frequent revolutions, civil broils at home, and wars abroad, have constantly marked the Rohilla government

* Consult the account of the Rohilla Afghans, published by the late Captain Charles Hamilton, of Bengal.

under its different rulers. Yet has it been evinced in more instances than one, that by kind and proper treatment even this generally-considered ferocious tribe may be rendered tractable : that when their peculiarities and prejudices are attended to by a wise and liberal government, they will prove not only good subjects, but even steady and faithful allies.

Shortly after the battle of Cuttura, Zulfica Al Dowla joined the vizir and the British forces. He was received with distinction, and the vizir nominated him to the Neabut of the vizarut, an office more honourable than lucrative, but accepted by the captain general with thankfulness. Shuja Dowla now thought proper to dismiss him; and in order to attach him more to his interests, gave a reinforcement of his own troops.

It has been seen that by the treaty of Delhi, Shuja Al Dowla had agreed to share his conquests with the king, and to make an equal division of the plunder acquired by the war. Consonant to the spirit of this treaty, the captain general had come from Delhi in aid of the vizir : but the behaviour of Shuja on this occasion was neither just nor honourable. Though immense plunder had been acquired in the late battle, his avaricious spirit prompted him to retain the whole to himself ; and when urged by the captain general to deliver up the king's share he peremptorily declined it. A conduct, in every respect so unwarrantable excited extreme disgust in the king's mind ; but having made several fruitless and ineffectual endeavours to alter the vizir's resolution, his majesty at length desisted, and Nujuff Khan was compelled to return to Delhi.

Shuja Dowla, after settling the government of the province, and appointing Aumils to the several districts, took his leave of the British commander in chief, and returned to Oude. During the remainder of that year, he employed himself in arranging the affairs of the province of Furrokabad, which was tributary to him ; but having been long afflicted with a violent disorder, which now returned with accumulated violence, notwithstanding every exertion and assistance afforded by his physician, he expired in his palace at Fyzabad.*

An historian,† respectable for his talents, has informed the world that the reigning family in Oude were obscure in their

* In the month of January 1775.

† Colonel Dow.

origin and of low birth ; but as that information, from accounts procured at a later period, appears to be incorrect, we have, with that deference to fidelity which the impartiality of history demands, detailed a more authentic account* of the rise of that family.

SAADUT KHAN

Saadut Khan, son of Mirza Nussur Al Deen Hyder, known at first under the name of *Meer Mahomed Ameen*, was born in the city of Nishapore, in the province of Khorausaun. He was descended in a direct line from the Imaum Mousa Kasim, of the family of Ali, esteemed in Persia as of the highest and most noble extraction. Towards the conclusion of the reign of Behadur Shah, the son and successor of Aurengzeeb, many Persian families of distinction, retiring from the disorders and civil wars which overwhelmed their native country, sought an asylum in Hindostan. At that period Meer Mohamed Ameen, who had been bred to arms, became desirous of signalising himself ; and with the laudable hope of providing for his family, he bade adieu to his native country, and repaired to Lahore. He was received into the imperial service, and shortly after took the name of Saadut Khan. By means of the friendship which he formed with several of the principal officers about the court, he was introduced to the emperor's notice, and stood high in his favour, and continued so until his death. On the accession of Mahmud Shah, Saadut Khan was created a noble of the empire ; and through the influence of his great patron, Sirbullund Khan, he was nominated to the government of Akbarabad.—Increasing in favour, he was appointed Soobadar of Oude, and at the same time presented with the rank of 7000 horse, and honoured with a new patent of nobility.† During the reign of Mahmud Shah he held with applause the highest offices of the state ; and by his successes in Deccan, and on the frontiers of the empire, upheld the tottering fortunes of a weak and dissolute government.

* In this detail the author has principally followed a small genealogical work, entitled *Owsaf Asoph*, or the Genealogy of Asuf Al Dowla, the present vizir, which was procured by the friendship of Mr. George Johnstone, many years resident at Lucknow.

† His titles at length were Boorhan Al Mooluk, Itimaud Al Dowla Meer Mahmud Ameen Khan, Behadur Shoukul Jung. In English thus:

Pillar of the empire, confident Support of the State, Meer Mahmud Ameen Khan, the Glory of War.

But in paying this tribute to his abilities, his conduct, when actuated by base and unworthy motives, must be equally reprobated. At the memorable invasion of Hindostan by Nadir Shah, when his country became a prey to savage ferocity and lawless outrage, Saadut Khan, from selfish views and a spirit of inordinate ambition, excited the vengeance of the conqueror, and by apprising him of the immense riches to be acquired by visiting the capital, he brought incalculable calamity upon his sovereign and his subjects.*

He did not, however, live, as has been justly remarked, to reap the fruits of a conduct so treacherous, dying, shortly after the conqueror's entrance into Delhi, of a cancer in his back.

SEFDAR JUNG

When Saadut Khan quitted his native country, he left behind him an only sister, married to a nobleman named Jaafer Beg. He promised at his departure, should fortune prove favourable, to send for his family to Hindostan, which he did accordingly. But Jaafer Beg had died and left two sons, Abul Munsoor Khan and Mirza Mohiussun, the former better known as Sefdar Jung. These youths were received with affectionate regard by Saadut Khan ; and to perpetuate the family honours, he bestowed his only daughter in marriage to the elder brother. That princess, the grand mother of the reigning Nuwaub, is well known to the British nation. After living to the great age of ninety, she expired a few years since at her palace in Oude. On the death of his uncle, the young Nawaub Sefdar Jung was confirmed by the king in his government of Oude ; and on the departure of the Persian conqueror, became a great favourite at the court of Mahmud Shah. Employed, like his predecessors, in distant parts of the empire, his success was frequently brilliant ; and he rose gradually to the highest honours in the state. In addition to the government of Allahabad, he was appointed to the office of Grand Master of the Artillery ; and on the death of the celebrated Nizam Al Mooluk, was made vizir† of the empire, and dignified with

* Consult second volume of Captain Scott's interesting History of the Successors of Aurengzeb.

† It was not then the son of a Persian pedlar who ruled over Oude, but a man of birth and family; and whatever might have been his demerits, or political errors, his services to his country entitle him, in every unprejudiced mind, to an appellation more honourable.

honours and titles. He died in 1756, having the character of a daring and intrepid soldier, and esteemed by his own subjects as a good man and upright magistrate.

SHUJA DOWLA

Shuja Dowla, son and successor of Sefdar Jung, was called in his younger* days Mirza Jelaul Addeen Hyder. Had this prince lived in the reign of Shah Jehan, or the Great Aurengzeeb, he might have attained a high character in the annals of the empire; but he was born at a period when the house of Timoor was rapidly declining, and the superior genius of a foreign nation had acquired an ascendancy not to be overthrown. Shuja Dowla, in his contest with the English, having rashly espoused the cause of the unfortunate Cassim Ali, Nuwaub of Bengal, felt the effects of this ascendancy; and after two unsuccessful attempts, perceiving his incapacity to resist, he wisely resolved to conciliate the attention of his enemies. He was not deceived; the peace of 1765 (well known in Europe) placed him in a situation more eligible than what he held at the commencement of the war: for, exclusive of restoration of the conquered provinces, he became the friend and ally of the English; and to cement the union by still closer ties, he asked and obtained the assistance of a British force for the protection of his frontiers.

When released from the afore-mentioned contest, Shuja Dowla directed his attention to the augmentation of his army, and to the management of the affairs of his own dominions, into the government of which great abuses had been introduced. If we take his character comparatively, Shuja Al Dowla will be allowed considerable merit: active and vigorous in his mind, he was bold, daring, and enterprising, which he manifested on various occasions, and in situations of danger and difficulty. His temper was irascible, which often led him to commit acts of cruelty; yet he was an excellent magistrate, a lover of justice, and anxiously desirous of the prosperity of his country. To the internal economy of his government, he paid a rigid attention; and by his judicious

*It is customary in Hindostan, and throughout several of the Asiatic courts, to change the name of a prince on his accession to the throne. Thus the famous Jehanguir was called *Selin*; Shah Jehan, *Khorram*; Shuja Al Dowla, *Mirza Jelaul Adder Hyder*; his son and successor, Asuf Al Dowla, was *Mirza Amauni*. Many other instances occur.

and prudent arrangements, aided by the exertions of some very able officers, he cleared his dominions from the remains of a nest of banditti which had long infested and disgraced them. His conduct with regard to his neighbours, the Rohillas, was on every account the most exceptionable ; and his hostile attempt to destroy their power evidently originated from a spirit of ambition, boundless as inordinate and reprehensible : nor can his endeavours to extenuate his conduct by throwing the blame on the impolitic obstinacy of the Rohillas in refusing to discharge the stipulated sum, in any shape justify the means he used to effect their destruction.*

* In the above detail it has been the author's intention to be guided by the strictest impartiality, neither wishing to exalt too high the character of any individual who merited praise, nor to abstain from censure when it appeared deserving.

CHAPTER V

Return of the Captain General to DELHI—Accession of ASUF AL DOWLA to the Government of OUDE—Embassy of ILLUJ KHAN to DELHI—Proceedings against ZABITA KHAN—Defeat of the King's Troops—ZABITA KHAN unites with the Seiks—Succinct Account of that Nation—Occurrences.

NUJUFF KHAN, on his arrival at Delhi, met with a reception different from his expectations. The king was disgusted with him for not having insisted in a more resolute manner upon the delivery of the districts which had been stipulated in the late treaty with the vizir; and for omitting to urge his right to participate in the plunder acquired in the Rohilla war. Shah-Aulum, in fact, suspected his minister to have been influenced on this occasion more by an attention to his own interests than that of his sovereign, as the vizir, previous to his departure, publicly bestowed on Nujuff Khan the Neabut* of the vizarut. This suspicion was diligently fostered in the king's mind by the suggestions of Mujud Al Dowla, who now began to acquire an ascendancy over his majesty; and being jealous of the authority and influence of Nujuff Khan, resolved to oppose him in everything. The minister had long entertained hopes of that very appointment; but baffled in his exertions to attain it, he represented his rival as a person desirous of advancing his own authority over that of his master. Nujuff Khan, however, had too powerful a party at court, as well as in the camp, to be easily supplanted; and the war against the Jauts requiring immediate attention, his majesty appeared satisfied with the excuses offered by Nujuff Khan.

The army again assembled, and the captain general led it without delay against the fort of Deig, the only place of consequence that remained to the Jauts. Nujuff Khan having

* The deputysnip of the office of vizir, or his representative at the court of Delhi.

invested the fort on all sides, and completed the blockade, detached a small portion from his main body throughout the adjacent country, and reduced many of the Zemindars to obedience.

While the army lay before Deig, an embassy arrived in camp, sent by the vizir Asuff Al Dowla. That young prince, who succeeded to the Musnud of Shuja Al Dowla, was eighteen years of age. On his accession, it was deemed advisable to request of Shah-Aulum a confirmation of his patent of the vizarut in his own name. For this purpose, Illuj Khan, favourite servant, was deputed to Delhi, attended by a splendid suite, and carrying with him fifty lacks of rupees as a paishcush. After a short stay in the camp, he proceeded on to the capital, where his success at first fell short of his expectations. The king did not appear inclined to expedite the patent; and under various pretences delayed giving a direct answer.—But a severe misfortune which at this time befell his majesty's arms, caused an immediate and ready assent. Zabita Khan had again become refractory, and refused to forward the stipulated tribute to the royal treasury; and was now prepared to support his rebellion by force of arms. Abdul Cassem Khan, on the part of the king, was ordered to march an army to attack the rebel, Zabita Khan, who was posted in Ghose Ghur, hearing of that nobleman's approach, marched boldly out, and offered him battle. A desperate conflict ensued, and the event was on the point of proving favourable to the royal forces, when a body of Patan horse, who had been planted in an ambuscade by Zabita Khan at the commencement of the action, came suddenly out of the place, and fell upon the rear of the king's troops with such fury as totally to discomfit them. The general was slain whilst endeavouring to rally his men; and his fall threw the troops into such disorder, that it was with great difficulty Mujud Al Dowla, who succeeded to the command, was enabled to make good his retreat with a very small party. Zabita Khan re-entered his fort in triumph.

Accounts of this fatal disaster arriving at court, created the greatest consternation and dismay. Fortunately, however, for Shah-Aulum, at this critical moment he was relieved by the appearance of Lataufut Khan, one of the vizir's officers, who

brought along with him a body of 5000 troops, and a train of artillery, for the king's use. This salutary aid proved of the highest service; and being relieved from any apprehensions for the present, the court determined to gratify the vizir for the essential service he had rendered. A patent was immediately made out, accompanied with the insignia of office and valuable presents; and the whole were sent off with much pomp and solemnity under the charge of four commissioners named by the king for this express purpose.

During these transactions, Nujuff Khan was still employed before Deig: that fortress, which was uncommonly strong and defended by a numerous garrison, continued for more than a twelve month to bid defiance to the efforts of Nujuff Khan. The repeated and bloody assaults which were made by the garrison had, however, much weakened their force, and the health of the Jaut prince beginning to decline, he entertained thoughts of submission; but before he had time to execute his resolution, he was hurried off by death. Runjeet Sing, his brother, succeeded to the command; he was willing to continue the defence to the last extremity; but provisions growing scarce, his troops mutinied, and he was compelled to withdraw privately from the fort.

Accordingly, availing himself of the opportunity of an extreme dark night, and taking with him his family and treasures, accompanied by the greater part of the garrison, he effected his escape. On the ensuing morning, the king's troops, who were prepared for an assault, were astonished to find the walls unmanned, and no appearance of resistance. The general at first suspected a stratagem but on a closer inspection, perceiving the rebels had actually retired, he entered and took possession.

A great quantity of ammunition and stores, with a train of artillery, were taken, but not much plunder, which circumstances exasperated the troops, and induced them to commit all sorts of violence upon the defenceless inhabitants. Not content with insulting them, they proceeded to attack their Pagodas, where they broke and demolished the idols, in spite of the prayers and entreaties urged by the poor wretches in behalf of their altars. On the capture of Deig, all the remaining part of the Jaut

country submitted; and as heavy fines were imposed by the general upon the different Zemindars, he continued to fill his treasury, which enabled him to discharge the arrears of his troops; at the same time he ordered a general rejoicing throughout the camp.

The embassy aforementioned arriving at the same time, Nujuff Khan availed himself on the occasion to shew his respect to the vizir, by entertaining the commissioners in the most splendid manner. He feasted them for several days, and then dismissed them with additional presents.

The conquest of the Jauts being now complete, Nujuff Khan directed his attention to the collection of the revenues, and in reforming the abuses which had prevailed during the war. But in the midst of his arrangements, he was suddenly called off by letters received from Delhi, which required his immediate presence at that city. Zabita Khan, whose success, as already related, had inflamed his resentment and excited his ambition, was resolved to persist in his rebellion, and actually threatened Delhi with a siege. Previous, however, to proceeding to open hostilities, he augmented his army, and took into his pay large bodies of *Seiks*.

He formed, moreover, connections with some of the principal chiefs of that nation; and in order to render this alliance the more effectual, he embraced the tenets of this extraordinary sect, and became a convert to their faith. The part which the Seiks have borne in the transactions of later times in the upper parts of Hindostan, justify an attempt to describe their origin and progressive advancement to authority in the empire.

During the reigns of Akbar, Jehangire, Shah Jehan and Aurengzeeb, the annals of Hindostan exhibit a series of events and brilliant actions which raised the empire to the first station in the history of Asia. Emulating the conduct of their founder the great Timoor, those princes whilst they trod in his steps rendered their dominions flourishing and their people happy, and the power of that august family appeared established on so solid a basis as to bid defiance to the fluctuating and capricious changes of fortune; but the seeds of dissolution and decay were internally generated even in the height of their prosperity; and the indolence, folly and effeminacy, of the princes of later times,

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overthrew the fabric of power, and buried the authority of the house of Timoor under its ruins. Out of the shipwreck of its former grandeur, several new and independent states arose. To the *Seiks*, among others, may be assigned an interesting station; obscure in their origin, in a remote part of the province of Lahooor, this tribe had nothing but novelty to recommend itself or attract notice.

In the reign of the Emperor Baber, *Nanick Shah*, founder of the tribe, was born at a small village named Tulbindee, in the province of Lahooor; at an early period of life, this extraordinary person, who possessed a good capacity and amiable manners, forsook the world, and devoted himself to a life of religious austerity. In this recluse state, aided by the effusions of a fervid imagination, Nanick framed a system of religion, composed from the speculative and contemplative theories of Mussulman divinity, which he delivered to his numerous followers as of divine origin. This book he termed *Gurrunt*, which, in the Punjabee dialect, implies scriptural. Nanick, after reaching his nintieth year, expired peaceably, and was buried at Amrit Seer, where his tomb to the present day attracts the attention, and animates the piety of his numerous disciples. He left two children, Lucsmi Doss and Sree Chund.

At his death, Nanick Shah, with a view to render permanent his new system, ordained that the succession should be elective and not hereditary, an ordination which, as it precluded the supreme authority from remaining in one family, placed the benevolent and disinterested views of the founder in a light truly amiable. Sree Chund, who found means to secure his election, presided over the tribe for several years, and, at his death, Angajee succeeded. But this custom though it obtained for some time, was at length set aside, and Gooroo Ram was the first who established an hereditary succession.

The tribe continuing to increase by the vast number of converts which it had acquired, had not hitherto attracted the notice of the neighbouring powers; occupied in paying a scrupulous adherence to the laws and ordinations of their founder, the *Seiks* were looked upon as harmless, inoffensive devotees; but the period was at hand when they were to act a different

part, and to contend with vigour against imperial authority. Teigh Behadur, whose actions and misfortunes render his name memorable, was the first who took up arms against the officers of Aurengzeeb, till after many bloody encounters with the king's troops, he was at length overcome, taken prisoner, and put to death. His successors, animated by revenge, continued a predatory war with the descendants of Aurengzeeb, and, during the struggle, the Seiks acquired a considerable addition of territory. Among the most memorable of these chiefs, was Bundah, who, after a long and severe contest, was taken prisoner, carried to Delhi, and there suffered with heroic fortitude an ignominious death.*

In the reign of Ahumud Shah the tribe became very formidable. Profiting by the disturbances which then prevailed in every part of the empire, the Seiks again made head against the government, and with far better success. They conquered the whole of the Punjab, (or country included within the five rivers which fall into the Indus) and even pushed their arms beyond it.

In the last reign (Aulum Geer the Second) their dominions were bounded on the west by the country of Cabul, and extended eastward to the vicinity of Delhi, north by a range of high mountains, and to the southwest they embraced the province of Moultan and the city of Tatta, situated on the banks of the Indus. Lahooor, the capital of Punjab, was selected as their chief city of residence, and as such has since continued. They possess many large towns, and among the principal are those of Puttiali, Hurrial, Loeh Ghur, Serhind, Shahabad, and Tanasser. The Seik territories are said to contain prodigious quantities of cattle, horses, oxen, cows, and sheep; and grain of various kinds is produced in abundance. The precious metals are very scarce; and their trade is for that reason chiefly carried on by barter, especially in the manufacturing towns.

At Pattiali they make excellent cloth, and fire arms superior to most parts of Hindostaun. The collected force of the Seiks is immense, they being able to bring into the field an army of

* See a particular account of this enterprising chief in Captain Scott's second volume of the History of Deccan. Article *Furrok Seer*.

250,000* men, a force apparently terrific, but, from want of union among themselves, not much to be dreaded by their neighbours. Divided into distinct districts, each chief rules over the portion appropriated to him with uncontrolled sway; and tenacious of his authority, and jealous of his brethren, it seldom happens that this nation makes an united effort†.

The Seiks are armed with a spear, scymetar, and excellent matchlock. Their horses are strong, very patient under hardship, and undergo incredible fatigue. The men are accustomed to charge on full gallop, on a sudden they stop, discharge their pieces with a deliberate aim, when suddenly wheeling about, after performing three or four turns, they renew the attack. The shock is impressive when offered only to infantry, but against artillery they cannot stand. It is a fact well known and established, that a few field pieces is sufficient to keep in check their most numerous bodies. Inured from their infancy to the hardships of a military life, the Seiks are addicted to predatory warfare, in a manner peculiar to themselves alone. When determined to invade a neighbouring province, they assemble at first in small numbers on the frontier, when having first demanded the *raki* or tribute, if it be complied with, they retire peaceably; but when this is denied, hostilities commence, and the Seiks, in their progress, are accus-

* The following table, which was delivered to the author by a Seik chief when at Pannepat in 1793-4, will exhibit the situation of the different chiefs at that period.

	Men
Beejee Sing	12,000
Tanah Sing	22,000
Jeffah Sing	14,000
Kurun Sing (of Shahabad)	12,000
Jeffah Sing (of Ramghur)	12,000
Jundut Sing (of Amrit Seer)	24,000
Khosal Sing (of Fuzoolah Pore)	22,000
Herru Sing (on the confines of Moultan)	40,000
Runjet Sing (of Loeh Ghur)	70,000
Shahur Sing (of Pattali), Loll Sing, Juswaunt Sing (of Nawbch), Gujput Sing (of Chunda), and other chiefs	20,000
Total	<u>248,000</u>

† The alarm once excited in the British government of the formidable power of this nation, might be obviated by observing, that the discordant and clashing interests of the respective Seik chiefs prevent almost the possibility of a general union; and even if disposed to attack the territory of our ally, the vizir, they would be necessitated to keep a watchful eye over their own territories, which would be left open to invasion from the north. It is well known that Zamaun Shah, the king of Cabul, is desirous of sharing in the fertile province of Punjab, and especially of getting possession of Lahoor, emphatically termed the key of Hindustaun. His late attack at the end of 1796, is a proof of this assertion.

tomed to lay waste the country on all sides, carrying along with them as many of the inhabitants as they can take prisoners, and all the cattle. The prisoners are detained as slaves, unless redeemed by a pecuniary compensation.—But though fond of plunder, the Seiks, in the interior parts of their country, preserve good order, and a regular government : and the cultivation of their lands is attended with much assiduity. Their revenues are collected at two stated periods of six months each ; and by an equitable adjustment between the proprietor and cultivator, the latter is allowed a fifth part as the reward of his labour.

Of their religion much information has not as yet been acquired; but it has been remarked by an ingenious and spirited historian, that in the act of receiving proselytes, they compel them to the performance of an act equally abhorrent to principles of the Hindoo or Mahomedan faith.* Yet, notwithstanding the nature of their ceremonies, it is certain they continue to gain numerous converts.

The Seiks, in their persons, are tall, and of a manly erect deportment ; their aspect is ferocious, their eyes piercing and animated ; and in tracing their features a striking resemblance is observable to the *Arabs* who inhabit the banks of the Euphrates. The dress of the males consists of a coarse cloth of blue cotton, thrown loosely over the shoulders, and coming down between the legs, is confined round the waist by a belt of cotton. An ample turban of blue cloth covers the head, and over this is frequently worn a sash of silk and cotton mixed, resembling both in colour and pattern a *Scotch Tartan*. They speak the Aufgaun or Pooshto language, with prolific additions of Persian, Arabic, and Hindoojee.†

From this digression let us proceed to relate the transactions at court. Shah-Aulum, who was enraged at Zabita Khan for

* By obliging the Mussulmaun to drink water, in which some Seiks have washed their feet, mixed with hog's blood, and the Hindoo with that of a cow. See Captain Scott, Vol. II. article *Furrok Seer*.

† In the year 1793-4, the author was at Panneput in company with Major Charles Reynolds, of the Bombay establishment, employed by the British government on a survey through the Doo Ab; the result of which, when communicated to the public, will no doubt prove a valuable addition to the geography already acquired. At that time he saw a body of Seiks then in the service of the great Sindiah; they were about one thousand in number, under the command of Doolchee Sing, from whose brother most of the information above mentioned was received. The author has to apologise for giving a sketch so imperfect, though he is happy to learn there is another and far better account already before the public from the late Colonel James Browne, of the Bengal establishment, but which account the author has not seen. The account here given stands merely on his own researches.

his repeated acts of insolence and disrespect, resolved to take the field in person, and had for this purpose, as above remarked, ordered the captain general from Deig. On the minister's arrival, the king marched out and encamped.

At a secret conference held on the occasion, it was resolved, previous to commencing hostilities, to make one effort to persuade the rebel to return to his duty ; though had a retrospect of his former conduct been taken, they would have foreseen the insufficiency of any but resolute measures. Agreeably to this resolve, Rajah Daicram, Himmut Behadur, and Lutafut, were sent to Sehaurunpore to treat and offer terms ; but for fear of an unsuccessful issue, the king and the general followed with the army. The deputation at first gave hopes of a peaceful termination. A conference took place between the captain general, Mujud Al Dowla, and Zabita Khan ; but unhappily a misunderstanding arose, which proceeded to violent altercation on both sides. Whether Zabita Khan, who was of a turbulent and haughty spirit, could not brook the manner of the king's ministers, who talked in a high strain, or whether he was determined at all events on resistance, has not been clearly ascertained. From whatever cause it arose, he was observed as he came out of the tent to be uncommonly agitated ; and without waiting for the ministers to accompany and introduce him, repaired directly to the royal tent. Having paid his respect to the king, he withdrew to his own camp ; and suddenly, without assigning any reason for such a conduct, struck his tents and went into fort. Notwithstanding so glaring and insolent a conduct, the king did not proceed to the immediate punishment of the rebel. On the contrary, he was persuaded, through the mediation of Lutafut, who, it is asserted, was bribed largely on the occasion, to pardon him. Zabita Khan was, therefore, invited to court, and, on promising submission, was again confirmed in his government of Sehaurunpore. The army returned to Delhi.

CHAPTER VI

Revolt of the Rajah of JYPORE—Succinct Account of the Principalities of OUDIPORE—JOUDPORE and JYPORE—The King marches to JYPORE—Taking of NARNOUL and DHANSNEY—Disgrace of MUJUD AL DOWLA—Death of Prince FURKHINDA BUKHT—Death and Character of NUJUFF KHAN.

ON the return of royal army to Delhi, Nujuff Khan, who had lately been appointed to the government of Agrah, repaired to that province : about this time news arrived at the court of the death of Madhoo Sing, ruler of Jypore, and of the accession of Pertaub Sing, a youth of twelve years of age, to his father's government. The considerable share which this prince bore in the transactions of the court of Delhi, justify our taking a retrospective view of the provinces of Oudipore, Joudpore, and Jypore, or the countries denominated by geographers *Rajpoolana*.*

When the Moguls first entered Hindostaun, they found the inhabitants in general effiminate and luxurious, and in consequence incapable of opposing with effect those hardy bands who at first under Zingis Khan, and afterwards his descendant, the Great Timoor, acquired a succession of conquests, and finally laid the foundation of the Mogul empire in Hindostaun in the person of Baber, sixth in descent from Timoor.

But however competent to overturn the Patan government, they found it more difficult to subdue the great Rajpoot principalities.—The princes of those countries, who were the aboriginal sovereigns of Hindostaun, inherited from their ancestors a high and warlike spirit, which, added to the natural advantages of their situation, in countries surrounded by high mountains and intersected by narrow vallies and numerous defiles, rendered hazardous a foreign invasion. The Rajpoot princes therefore continued long to resist with effect the valour and discipline of the Mogul troops ;

* Consult the excellent memoir of a map of Hindostaun by Major Rennel, to whom the author begs leave to return his thanks for his liberal and polite attention in permitting him to copy the map prefixed to this volume.

and the different sovereigns of the house of Timoor, after repeated, but ineffectual, struggles to reduce them by force, were in the end necessitated to adopt a method more conciliatory. The first princes of the race of Timoor not only invited them to the capital, and heaped upon them honours and dignities of all kinds, but were accustomed to intermarry with their families, a circumstance, which, if the tenacious adherence of the Hindoos to preserve their blood pure and uncontaminated be considered, would appear disgraceful ; but an alliance with the sovereign was, among the Hindoos, deemed honourable by the ancient usages of their country.

The great acquisition of interest thus obtained by the Rajpoot princes, the security of their possession, and, above all, the prospect of their descendants mounting the throne, were motives that insured a cheerful acquiescence in the proposed alliances, and abated their ardent love of independence, and contributed to render them contented in their tributary state. Accordingly, during the reigns of Jchanguire, Shah Jehan and Aurengzeeb, the Rajpoot princes, were gradually allied to royal blood.*

Rajpootanab†, or country of the Rathore Rajpoots, in the imperial register is included in the province of Agimere. From Jypore, one of the principal cities, it extends 168 coses†† to its north-western boundary of Bekaneer, a city which skirts the confines of the desert ; to the eastward it extends 150 coses, and is bounded on that quarter by Agra ; west by the city of Debalpore, on the banks of the Sutluz ; and south by the province of Guzerat.

The principal river, the Puddar, rises in the mountainous part of the country ; and, after traversing a vast extent, is discharged into the sea, near the gulph of Kutch.

Within the afore-mentioned tract are the cities of Oudipore, Joudpore, and Jypore, including the strong fortresses of Cheitore, and Rintimpore ; the former memorable for resisting the arms of the emperor Akbar ; and the latter for having afforded an asylum

*See Dow's Hindostan—*passim*.

†In this description the author has availed himself of a Persian MS. Intitled Hudecka Al Akauleem, or a geographical account of several of the principal cities and provinces of Hindostan. It is written by a learned native, and contains much curious and useful information.

††Cose is equal to two British miles.

to the families of Shah Jahan and Aurengzeeb, when in rebellion against their parents. These countries abound in cotton, opium, indigo, tobacco, and grain of various kinds, most of which articles are exported to Ahmudabad, the capital of Guzerat, which returns the manufactures of Europe and Persia. They have also a breed of excellent horses, which are in general use among the Marhatta armies. While the empire flourished, the revenues of the Agimere province were estimated at twenty-six millions; and the different Rajahs, when united, could bring into the field an army of 200,000 men, a force truly formidable, and which proved frequently fatal to the Mogul princess, even in the zenith of their power and authority. To conclude our remarks on this singular people, in the words of a spirited historian*, "their situation enabled them to retaliate injuries in the center of the empire; but attached to their soil, as ground on which their deities as well as their ancestors had lived, few of their princes had been ambitious of increasing their territory."

Towards the close of the last century, Jysing, a prince no less celebrated for his warlike talents than for his reputation as a philosopher and a cultivator of the arts, founded the modern city of Jypore, which he called Jynagghar. It is situated in the central parts of Rajpootanah, and about 140 miles west of Agra. The town is handsome and well built; the houses are of stone, and the streets, which are large and spacious, intersect each other at right angles. A citadel, which commands the town, is built upon a steep rock, around which extends a chain of fortifications four miles in circumference. In the town is to be seen an observatory, erected by the prince aforementioned, to which, during his life time, many eminent and learned men were invited, where the science of astronomy was assiduously cultivated.

This city has of late years increased in commerce and opulence; for since the communication through the province of Lahooor has been stopped by the Seiks, the merchants from the north have been accustomed to enter Hindostan by the route of Jypore. Rock salt, iron, and copper, are found in the province; and its revenues are estimated at five millions sterling.

*Orme's Historical Fragments.

The inhabitants are wholly Hindoos; and their manners are represented by travellers to be hospitable and unaffected. Since the death of Jysing, who may be considered as the founder of the present family, there has been a succession of four princes.* Purtab Sing, who, as already remarked, was a minor in the hands of his guardians, from inexperience was incapable of governing and entirely under the guidance of others. During the late disturbances, his ministers taking advantage of the absence of the royal army, had neglected to send to court the customary tribute, which Shah-Aulum was determined to punish. He accordingly assembled the army, the command of which was given to the Nawaub Mujud Al Dowla. This nobleman, eager to gratify his own ambition, had long beheld with impatience the authority of Nujuff Khan; he thought the present opportunity favourable to his views; and the absence of the captain general, who was employed in the Agra province, gave him hopes of establishing his ascendancy over the mind of his sovereign, and by the reduction of the Jypore country fix himself in power without control.

The army being assembled, Mujud Al Dowla, accompanied by the king marched against Rewari, a large town in the dominions of Pertaub Sing, the place after a short resistance submitted, as did also the forts of Narnoul and Dhansney. The success of these operations induced Mujud Al Dowla to carry the king to a greater distance, and to propose to his majesty to extend his circuit through the provinces of Agimere, under pretext of paying his devotions at the shrine of a Mahomedan saint. This plan which was to separate the king from Nujuff Khan, would in all probability have succeeded, had not a circumstance occurred which baffled his schemes, and led in the end to important consequences. Nujuff Khan hearing of the late successes, and perceiving the increased influence of Mujud Al Dowla, ventured on a personal visit to the royal camp; and leaving the care of Agra to his friend Mahomed Beg Khan, he began his march towards Jypore. The ministers of Pertaub Sing, after the losses aforementioned, finding farther resistance vain, now made overtures of submission in the name of their master, and a negotiation accordingly commenced. A large

*Jysing Sewaii, Alseri Sing, Prithi Sing, Madhoo Sing.

paishcush was offered on the part of the young Rajah, and professions of loyalty and attachment in his future conduct.—Pending this treaty, Nujuff Khan, who was informed of the circumstance, resolved it should not be terminated until his own arrival. He, therefore, dispatched an express to the king, requesting that the treaty should not be concluded without him; and on his own authority forbade the Jypore Vakeel to proceed any farther in the affair. Commands dictated in terms so forcible had the desired effect, and Shah-Aulum was compelled to acquaint Mujud Al Dowla of his acquiescence in the demands of his rival.

In a few days the army of Nujuff Khan arrived in the neighbourhood of the royal camp, and, to do the general honour, his majesty sent his third son, the Prince Yczdan Bukht, to meet and conduct him to the presence. A private conference was held on the occasion, and Mujud Al Dowla was convinced that the authority of his rival was too powerful to be overthrown. Pertaub Sing was now ordered to repair to the royal camp, and on presenting an offering of five lacks of rupees, received his majesty's pardon, and was restored to the government of the Jypore province. The army then returned to Delhi, where Nujuff Khan, soon after his arrival, celebrated the nuptials of his youngest daughter with the Nawab Nujuff Cooly Khan. The marriage was honoured by the king's presence, and in a few days after Nujuff Khan returned to Agrah.

During the remainder of the current year, little occurs at Delhi worthy of notice; but the ensuing season exhibited a new scene of action, and occasioned a considerable alteration on the face of affairs at court. The Sciks, who for several years had confined themselves to their own territories, now suddenly appeared in great numbers on the frontiers. A great force under different leaders having assembled, entered the king's territories, and commenced their usual course of plunder and devastation. They soon penetrated as far as Carnal, a large city 100 miles north of the capital. Of this they took possession, and dispersed their parties in various directions to overrun the province of Delhi. To repel this daring invasion, Mujud Al Dowla, accompanied by Furkhinda Bukht, a prince of the royal family, were ordered to take the field. Twenty thousand men, with a respectable train of artillery, were soon

ready to march. Advancing by easy marches along the western bank of the river Jumna, the royal army reached Carnal without interruption. At this place Runjeet Sing and Deo Sing, two of the principal leaders of the Seiks, dispatched a vakeel to camp with offers of submission. They promised a paishcush of three lacs of rupees, and to recall their associates from their predatory incursions. Mujud Al Dowla acquiescing in the proposal, those chiefs were directed to attend the royal army in its future progress. Accordingly having evacuated the town of Carnal, they joined the minister. From Carnal, Mujud Al Dowla advanced to Puttiali, a town 60 coses north of the latter, and situated on the Seik frontier. That place was defended by Amur Sing, who with a numerous garrison, and abundance of provisions, resolved to sustain a siege. Amur Sing had, however, other motives for resistance; he was aware that a large reinforcement of Seiks had left Lahore, and might shortly be expected at Puttiali; nor was he without hope that even in the event of their non-arrival, and the town being hard pressed, but that he should be able to gain over the minister to his views, by the aid of all-powerful gold. However this might have been Mujud Al Dowla besieged the place in form; but many days had not elapsed, when it was announced to the army, that a negotiation for peace was in train. Amur Sing consenting to become tributary, commissioners were appointed on both sides to draw up an amicable treaty. The conferences accordingly commenced; but an act of treachery on the part of the Seiks, and in which it was suspected the minister had a considerable share, suddenly dissolved the meeting. To relate with precision the circumstances which led to this breach of faith, we must recollect that the Seik chieftains, who had submitted at Carnal, were still in the royal camp. They having received advice of the expected reinforcement of their countrymen being near at hand, sent notification of it to Amar Sing; at the same time advising that chief by some means or other to break off the treaty then pending.

Agreeably to this information, Amur Sing exhibited to the commissioners many shuffling evasions and pretexts; and to this was added an haughty and contemptuous behaviour, which could not be mistaken. Rajah Daieram, the chief commissioner,

perceiving his drift, quitted the town of Pattiali, and with his associates returned to camp.

Meanwhile the traitors there endeavoured by studied respect to preclude all suspicion of their fidelity in the mind of the minister. Mujud Al Dawla said nothing; and his shameful supineness on this occasion in suffering the insults sustained by the royal commissioners at Pattiali to pass unnoticed, afforded additional proofs of his collusion in the disgraceful scene. Early on the following morning, Ranjeet Sing and his associate suddenly left the camp: a party was directed to go in pursuit of them; this party had scarcely cleared the advanced posts of the army, when they discovered the vanguard of an immense host of Seiks, who by forced marches had advanced thus far unnoticed. At the same instant Amur Sing, of Pattiali, issuing out of the fort, covered the retreat of the traitors, and with them shortly after joined the troops from Lahoor. The Seiks now made a violent attack on all sides: accustomed to a desultory mode of warfare, they charged the line in several parts at once, and by the fierceness of their onset, threw the king's troops into confusion. The whole army would now have been sacrificed had not the officer who commanded in the rear, by a well-directed fire of his artillery, given a timely check to the enemy. The king's troops were, however, compelled to retire; and for four days made a disgraceful and disorderly retreat. On the fifth day, the army reached Panniput, under the walls of which they encamped. Here the Seiks quitted them; and unsatiated with success, and fiercely thirsting for plunder, they divided into separate columns, and crossing the Jumna, spread themselves over the upper parts of the Doo Ab, committing everywhere acts of cruelty, devastation, and death.

The late disgraceful scenes had excited in the army universal indignation against Mujud Al Dowla. On him the eyes of all men were bent; and numbers scrupled not openly to accuse him of having been bribed by the Seiks to betray king's interests, and devote his army to utter ruin. If, indeed, it be considered that a finer and better appointed army never marched from Delhi, that they were flushed with recent successes, and animated by the presence of a prince of the blood; that this army should be incompetent to sustain the shock of a tumultuous rabble, appeared incredible in the eyes of all men, and proved

the reproaches thrown on the minister to be strictly merited. Even after the enemy had retired, instead of remaining on the frontier to recover his soldiers, from their late depression, he, as panic struck, marched precipitately to the capital, thereby leaving the whole country exposed in his rear, and the wretched inhabitants a prey to the ravages of those barbarous invaders. But he was soon to receive a punishment adequate to his deserts.

Intelligence of this disastrous event arriving at Delhi, consternation and dismay seized on all. The king was highly incensed at the base conduct of Mujud Al Dowla; and to prevent further ill consequences, required the immediate attendance of the captain general. It was indeed high time for some effectual interference. On one hand the Seiks were filling the Doo Ab with outrage and devastation, while on the other several of the Zemindars, availing themselves of the confusion of the times, rose in arms in many parts of the country.

The minister, who by this time had reached Delhi, on his arrival laboured incessantly to remove from the king's mind all suspicion of his fidelity. He entered into a long defence of his conduct, wherein he attempted to prove that the late disaster was imputable not to his want of attachment, but to the common accidents of war; that for himself he had ever been one of the foremost in zeal and exertion for his majesty's service.

Shah-Aulum, who was not in a condition as yet to refute the arguments of his minister, (that nobleman's guards having possession of the palace) apparently accepted his apologies; but the sequel inclined all thinking persons to conclude, that the king was in his own mind resolved on his disgrace. It must here be remembered that Mujud Al Dowla, from his extensive influence at court, had a strong party in his favour in the army; that he, moreover, was in possession of the king's person at the citadel, and therefore resolved to oppose his enemies by force of arms. It was justly feared that the contention between the rival chiefs would, to the citizens of Delhi, be attended with considerable mischief, if not of bloodshed.

These alarms, however, were happily subdued by the conduct and dexterity of the captain general, who was now on his way to the capital. By means of his emissaries, dispersed throughout the city, he, by large bribes and promises of preferment, drew over to

his own views the leading chiefs of the minister's party. Secure on this head, he hesitated not to carry his designs into instant execution.

On his arrival in the neighbourhood, the prince Furkhinda Bukht and Mujud Al Dowla were ordered to meet and conduct the captain general to court. Prior to Mujud Al Dowla's quitting the citadel, he received information of the intended combination against him. He was told of the designs of his enemies to seize him, and of the king's acquiescence and secret indignation toward him: finally, they recommended him to be upon his guard; and, in the strongest manner, urged him to remain within the citadel, where, with the force he possessed, he might bid defiance to the united efforts of his enemies. Staggered at the unexpected intelligence, the minister for a moment paused. But impelled by an unaccountable infatuation, he relied on the king's personal favour, and, musing the intreaties of his friends, resolved to go on.

Scarcely had the prince's retinue quitted the city, when Afrasiab Khan, a young soldier of fortune, who had been bred in the camp and in the family of Zulficar Al Dowla, at the head of 500 horse, seized on the gate; thence proceeding to the citadel, he compelled the garrison, who had been stationed there by Mujud Al Dowla, to lay down their arms and evacuate the fort. They obeyed: the spirited youth then took possession of Shah-Aulum in the name of his benefactor. The king having taken no notice of this transaction, it was supposed his majesty was apprised of the whole plan prior to its execution.

By this time the prince and Mujud Al Dowla had reached the camp of the captain general. After a few complimentary ceremonies, the minister was informed that he was no more to visit the king. Perceiving his disgrace inevitable, he begged leave to return to his palace in the city. This was allowed, but a guard was sent along with him; and shortly after the whole of his property, amounting to more than twenty lakhs of rupees, was seized, and confiscated to the use of the captain general.

In a court so fruitful of revolutions as Delhi, the removal or death of a minister is in general viewed by the people with perfect apathy and indifference: yet on this occasion, Mujud Al Dowla's conduct in the late expedition had excited a disgust among all

rank ; which, added to his former acts of rapacity and oppression to supply the extravagance of the court, altogether rendered his disgrace justly merited.

Zulficar Al Dowlah, on his presentation at court, was received by Shah-Aulum with marks of the most affectionate respect. In return he made an offering of four lacs of rupees, together with some beautiful Persian horses for the use of the king's stable. The palace of the late vizir Cummir Aldeen Khan was assigned for the residence of the new minister, who from henceforth determined to fix his residence at Delhi.

The dismissal of Mujud Al Dowla from all his employments occasioned some alterations in the arrangement of offices. At the recommendation of the captain general, the prince Mirza Juwaun Bukht was made superintendent of the bathing apartments ; prince Furkhinda Bukht, Meer Atush, or Grand Master of Artillery ; and his majesty honoured the captain general himself with the high office of Vakeel Mutluck, or Absolute Director General of the affairs of the empire.

The commencement of 1781 was taken up in preparations for punishing the Seiks. That lawless banditti were still ravaging the upper parts of the Doo Ab. To chastise them, Mirza Shussee Khan, a young nobleman who possessed great military experience, was detached from the capital with a body of twelve thousand men, and a suitable train of artillery. After crossing the Jumna, he went in quest of the enemy ; and after several ineffectual skirmishes and a desultory warfare, he at last brought them to a general and decisive action.

On the 15th of August, under the walls of Meerut, he attacked them with great gallantry and spirit : the king's troops, stimulated by the remembrance of their disgrace the preceding year, and burning for revenge, exerted on this occasion their utmost efforts to make an honourable amend. Success crowned their wishes in a total overthrow of the enemy with a terrible slaughter. Sahib Sing, their leader, with several other commanders of note, were slain on the spot, and upwards of 5000 men. Dispirited at this loss, the Seiks returned in the utmost confusion, crossed the Jumna with precipitation, and finally took refuge in their own territories, which afforded relief to the miserable inhabitants over

whom for the space of several months they had exercised the most uncontrolled and unbounded severity.

After the victory, Mirza Shuffee Khan humanely directed his attention to the distresses of the inhabitants ; and to afford them solid proofs of his benevolent intentions, he, in the name of his majesty, granted them a remission of taxes for a year.

Order being once more restored, he returned in triumph to the capital. Had the advantages we have above detailed been pursued with a vigour proportionate to the occasion, there is no doubt but the most substantial benefits would have accrued to the royal cause. The enemy were totally dispirited with their losses; and by natural consequence, were at variance with each other, and incapable of resistance. Here then was a most favourable opportunity afforded for extending the king's influence from the environs of his capital even to the Attock ; and of establishing his authority on so secure and permanent a base as in future to have effectually precluded all attempts of his ambitious neighbours, or, what was to him of more consequence, to keep within bounds his own rebellious subjects.—Unfortunately for the state, these advantages were not followed up ; nor could the prime minister be prevailed on to re-assemble the army for an invasion of the Punjab. He was now advancing in years, and had become indolent, to which it might be added the minister could not without jealousy behold the abilities and rising fortunes of Mirza Shussee Khan. High spirited and active, that nobleman had gained the attachment of the soldiery in a very uncommon degree ; and by acts of liberality and munificence, he was careful to confirm them in their sentiments.

Meanwhile, as the person most fit for the appointment, Mirza Shussec was nominated to the command of the frontier station ; and accordingly having received his dismissal from the presence, attended by a considerable force, he repaired to the city of Panniput.

About this time ambassadors from Lahoor arrived at court.—They brought letters of submission from the principal chiefs, which were accompanied by a large paishcush in money, and a promise of the payment in future of a regular tribute. The city of Carnal was likewise restored to king ; and the ambassadors moreover made a pecuniary compensation for the losses sustained

in the late invasion.

Shah-Aulum now celebrated the nuptials of his second son, Prince Akbar Shah, with a princess of the royal family. The ceremony was performed with much splendour at the house of the minister, who took this opportunity of gratifying his master by bestowing liberal presents on the new-married pair.

Toward the latter end of the current year, died the Prince Furkhinda Bukht. His remains were interred in the mausoleum of Humaioon, the general repository of the ashes of the house of Timoor*.

The death of the prince was followed shortly after by that of the minister. He had been much afflicted for several preceding years with a severe rheumatic complaint. This was increased by a complication of other disorders occasioned by an irregular mode of life, which at length inflamed his humours to such a degree of acrimony as rendered life a burthen to him. In this deplorable state, he languished for several months, till in the month of April 1782, he expired in the palace of Sefdar Jung, sincerely regretted by his sovereign, who visited him during his illness, and lamented by the inhabitants of Delhi, who loved and revered him. He was buried in the sepulchre of Ali Mirdaun Khan.

Mirza Nujuff Khan Zulficar Al Dowla was a native of Persia; by the mother's side, he claimed his descent from the royal house of Sefi, who, at the commencement of the present century, sat on the throne of Persia. When Nadir Shah usurped that government, he put under confinement all the relative branches of the royal family who remained. Among those were the mother of Nujuff Khan : she had two children, himself and a sister, named Khadeeja Sultaun.

In 1746, Mirza Mohussun, brother of Sefdar Jung, Soobadar of Oude, was sent on an embassy to the Persian court. By his intercession, the family obtained their liberty ; when the mother, preferring to remain in her native country, Mirza Mohussun carried back into Hindostan Mirza Nujuff Khan and his sister, at the time about thirteen years old. This princess was shortly after married to her deliverer, and had by him one son, who, in process of time, became governor of Allahabad. In that station Mahmud Cooli Khan, the person above mentioned, was, by order

*Vide Appendix I

of Shuja Al Dowla, most basely assassinated*.

Mirza Nujuff Khan, at the time of his nephew's decease, was likewise in the vizir's service.—But Shuja having taken an aversion to him, which most probably arose from an unworthy jealousy of his superior accomplishments, treated him in several instances with marked disrespect. The high spirit of Nujuff Khan could not brook these indignities, and accordingly quitted for ever the dominions of Oude.

In the year 1762, he repaired to Patna, where Cossim Ali Khan, Nabob of Bengal, at that time held his court. That prince taking Nujuff Khan into his service, he was promoted to the command of a body of Mogul horse. He was employed during the war that soon after broke out between the Sooba and the British government, and was present at the attack of Oudah Nulla, and other places ; and on all occasions conducted himself with vigour, spirit, and gallantry.

On the defeat of Shuja Dowla at the memorable battle of Buxar, and the total ruin of the affairs of the unfortunate Cossim, Mirza Nujuff Khan being unwilling to trust to the vizir's clemency, fought an asylum in Boghilcund. Here he remained until the treaty of Allahabad in 1765, when he was sent for by Shah-Aulum ; and at his recommendation, Lord Clive gave him a pension of two lacks of rupees, chargeable on the revenues of the Corah province.†

On his majesty's retreat from Allahabad, Nujuff Khan accompanied the court ; and from that period he rose, as we have seen in the preceding pages, to the first offices and highest honours in the state.

Mirza Nujuff Khan, by his powerful influence, high military character, and unrelaxed attention to business, was well fitted to conduct the affairs of the empire with a vigorous and steady hand. He restored order and tranquillity to the almost-ruined provinces; and by his wise administration, recruited in a considerable degree the exhausted finances.

Though continually surrounded by numerous and warlike enemies, the abilities of the captain general were equal to the contest. By a steady and undeviating pursuit in his designs, he

*At the Fort of Jelaulabad, about five miles distant from the city of Lucknow..

†See the reports of the select committee.

at length triumphed over all his enemies, and reaped the fruits of his well-earned labours by erecting for himself a noble principality. This, consisting of the province of Agrah, of which he was governor, the adjoining countries of Merut and Macheri, the whole of the Jaut territories, and greater part of the Doo Ab, altogether yielding a revenue of two million sterling. His establishment was magnificent and extensive ; and he lived in a manner worthy a prince.

To great skill in military affairs, Nujuff Khan added the happy talent of being able to conciliate the attachment of his troops in an uncommon degree. The soldiers admired his patience under adversity, his affability, generosity, and manliness of spirit ; and though, from a variety of circumstances, and the fluctuating changes incident to an Asiatic army, they were not unfrequently thrown into discontent, and sometimes even to mutiny, Nujuff Khan, on these critical occasions, never failed, by his address and dexterity, to pacify the most unruly without a diminution of his own authority.— A rare and fortunate example.

That no other person was equally capable to combine and keep together such a variety of discordant interests as the policy of an Eastern government ever exhibits, was effectually evinced in the examples of his successors.

Upon the whole, we may, with justice, ascribe to Nujuff Khan the character of an able statesman, a skilful commander, and a humane and benevolent man. Polite and affable in his manners to all persons, which is indeed proverbial to his countrymen, he was generous to his dependants, and strictly just. His death was deservedly regretted by Shah-Aulum, who certainly owed to Mirza Nujuff Khan a situation more respectable than he had before, or was hereafter, destined to experience*.

*The foregoing account of the Family of Nujuff Khan is extracted from a Persian MS. in the author's possession; it is entitled *Khazanah Omrah*, or Biography of the Mogul Nobility, a work frequently mentioned by Oriental historians.

CHAPTER VII

Transactions at Court subsequent to the Death of ZULFICAR AL DOWLA—AFRASIAB KHAN appointed Minister—Dissentions among the MOGUL Lords—Elevation of MIRZA SHUFFEE KHAN—Intrigues—He is assassinate before DEIG—Re—appointment of AFRASIAB KHAN—Reflections.

UNTIL Nujuff's Khan's death, affairs at court, though at times interrupted by temporary dissensions and disagreements betwixt the Mogul nobles, had by the active vigilance of the captain-general been amicably settled. But their turbulent spirit, however, restrained during his life time, now broke forth with a fury which was totally ungovernable. Hence in the sequel of this history we shall be reduced to the painful necessity of recording scenes of violence, anarchy, and bloodshed. Shah-Aulum advancing in years, and destitute of that energy and vigour of mind so necessary to stem the torrent, was compelled as occasions demanded to yield to its force, and the unhappy king, in the evening of life, had the mortification to perceive his authority totally annihilated, and himself become a wretched pageant in the hands of his rebellious subjects.

Among the principal competitors for power was Afrasiab Khan. This young soldier, bred in the camp, and under the eye of the late captain-general, had by his military talents acquired the affections of the army. He was nominated to the post of Ameer Al Omrah. His first attention was judiciously directed to secure the attachment of the different Mogul chiefs. Among these Mirza Shuffee Khan was one of the most powerful; his late success against the Seiks, and his situation in command of the frontiers, induced the minister to treat him with extraordinary attention. Afrasiab Khan, therefore, sent letters to that nobleman, expressive of the utmost cordiality, and recommended his vigilant attention to his charge on the frontiers. Similar letters were sent to the Nawaub Zabita Khan, ruler of Sehaurunpore. The new minister being popular in the army, and a man of acknowledged resolution, it was thought he would have secured a continuation of his

authority ; but an opposition which arose totally unexpected by him from an opposite quarter, not only for the present deprived him of his authority, but even brought him to the very brink of ruin.

To trace the cause of this opposition, we must recur to the situation of the family of the deceased minister. Nujuff Khan's sister, the Princess Khadjejee Sultaun, was at this time at Delhi, possessed of great wealth; and being a woman of a masculine and intriguing spirit, she boldly entered into the politics of the time, and resolved to form a party of her own. She had conceived a great aversion to Afrasiab Khan, who had treated her with disrepect, and knowing the ambition of Mirza Shussee, selected that nobleman as a counterpoise against the minister's influence. Khadjejee Sultaun, therefore, in concert with Zeein Al Abuden Khan, his brother, and other lords, whom she had gained over to her views, invited Mirza Shussee to march to Delhi, and take upon himself the administration of affairs. They assured him at the same time, that the king secretly approved the plan, and concluded by recommending his speedy appearance.

The design of this confederacy, however cautiously conducted, could not long be kept secret from Afrasiab Khan. Information of the intended conspiracy being conveyed to him, he resolutely determined on a counter plan, and by a coalition of interests with some disaffected lords, to defeat the designs of his enemies. Among these were the deposed minister, the Nawaub Mujud Al Dowla; that nobleman had since his disgrace been kept in close confinement. Afrasiab Khan finding him well inclined to the connection, applied to Shah-Aulum for his release. He observed to his majesty, that Mujud Al Dowla, having experienced a severe punishment for his faults, in a tedious imprisonment, and the confiscation of his fortune, there was now room for clemency towards him. Shah-Aulum acquiescing in the request, Mujud Al Dowla was liberated from his arrest, and again placed at the head of the Khalifa*, at the same time Nujuff Cooli Khon, son-in-law of the late minister, was promoted to the office of Dewaun. The contending parties were, in force, nearly equal, but as Afrasiab possessed the post of advantage, in having the citadel under his immediate

*The treasury.

command, he flattered himself with the hopes of success.

Such was the situation of affairs when Mirza Shuffee Khan, with his army arrived in the neighbourhood of Delhi. The king, it is said, being favourable to his pretensions, dispatched a confidential servant secretly to his camp, who recommended for the present his remaining inactive. This transaction did not escape the notice of Afrasiab Khan, and on receiving information of it from his emissaries, he determined by a vigorous measure, at once to bring the matter to issue. Repairing to the palace, he, in peremptory terms demanded the dismission of Mirza Shuffee, and told the king that perceiving his enemies had formed a plan to subvert his authority, it was incumbent on him by every means in his power, to prevent such an act of injustice. That with respect to the appearance of Mirza Shuffee at the capital, he must be called on to assign his motives for quitting his station on the frontiers without leave obtained, and in manifest violation of his oath of allegiance. Afrasiab Khan concluded with remarking the improper conduct of the Princess Khadejee Sultaun, whom he knew acted in concert with his enemies, and urged the necessity of laying some restraint upon her ambitious and intriguing spirit. He charged her with a design to degrade his majesty's authority; and finally concluded his remonstrance, with a requisition for that princess immediately to deliver up the fortress of Agra, with the cannon and warlike stores contained therein. Shah-Aulum under the restraint of his minister acquiesced in his demands, and accordingly Mirza Shuffee was called upon by letter to state his reasons for having quitted his station. This vigorous measure, though it alarmed Mirza Shuffee, did not incline him to relinquish his pursuits. Instead of answering to the charge, he advanced his camp opposite the Ajimere gate of the city, which he closely blockaded.

The aspect of affairs was gloomy. The rival chiefs were each determined to rest the issue of their respective claims to the sword, and a scene of tumult and horror was apprehended by the peaceful inhabitants. At this crisis of affairs an unexpected circumstance arose, which defeated the designs of the prime minister, and gave the palm of success to his opponent. During the disputes above related, Mahomed Beg Khan

distributed a large sum of money to the troops. His majesty then invested the Prince Juwaun Bukt with the office of Ameer Al Omrah, and returned to the palace. But this triumph of the court was of very short duration, and the principal actors in the late transaction were soon destined to experience a sad reverse of fortune. Indeed every attempt of this ill-fated monarch to emancipate himself from the restraints imposed by his rebellious servants, seems only in the conclusion to have rendered his situation more wretched.

Mirza Shussee and his associate on quitting Dclhi, determined to seek an asylum in the camp of his inveterate foes. But it must be recollected that circumstances were now materially altered. He, like them, was a fugitive, and a sense of their common danger had moreover naturally reconciled the exiled chiefs to a combination of their mutual interest. Mahomed Beg, Mirza Shussee, and Afrasiab Khan, having met in the neighbourhood of Muttra, after a mutual interchange of compliments, drew up a solemn treaty to the following effect : 1. An equal division was to be made of the lands, possessed by the late Nawaub Zulfcar Al Dowla. 2. Mirza Shussee Khan to be re-instated in the post of prime minister, and to remain at Delhi. 3. In consideration of Afrasiab Khan yielding up his claim to the chief direction of affairs, he was to be left in joint authority with Mahomed Beg Khan, to rule in the Doo Ab and south west of the Jumna. The treaty was concluded by an unanimous assurance of inflicting on their-enemies the most exemplary punishments. The united forces of these powerful chiefs then commenced their march towards the capital. On the road they were joined by Pertaub Row of Macheri. On reaching Fereedabad, a town about twelve miles south of Dclhi, the confederates encamped, and from hence resolved to dictate to the emperor their own terms. Agreeably to this resolution, Mujud Al Dowla was dispatched to court. He was commissioned in the name of the confederates to declare to Shah-Aulum, their resolution to maintain their allegiance to his majesty, but at the same time to the state the necessity of restoring to Mirza Shussee Khan, that authority of which by the machinations of his enemies he had been so unjustly deprived.

The arrival of this ambassador created the most alarming apprehensions in the king's mind. A council was assembled on

the occasion, when Prince Juwaun Bukt spiritedly proposed to oppose the rebels by force. He observed to his majesty with much judgment, that should the rebels obtain their insolent demands, there was no reasonable ground in future to hope that any respect would be paid to his majesty, but that traitors, as the natural effect of an easy compliance, would not rest satisfied without the complete degradation of the royal authority. The prince was supported in his opinion by the whole council, and Mr. Pauly affirmed that his own force was of itself sufficient to overthrow and disperse the rebels. But the king with a pusillanimity totally unworthy of him, which arose from a fear of sustaining insults should the rebels be successful, rejected the salutary advice of his son, and commanded him in concert with Mr. Pauly to enter into an amicable agreement with the confederates. Many persons at Delhi scrupled not to affirm, that the king on this occasion, was swayed by the intrigues carrying on in the haram. That the Princess Khadejee Sultaun, the aunt of Mirza Shuffee, had persuaded his majesty to pacific measures. It is most probable that to the latter cause may be attributed his irresolution. Pauly and Lutafut therefore, were charged with the negotiation, and to give appearance of greater cordiality on the part of his majesty, the Prince Juwaun Bukht was directed to accompany the commissioners to the rebel camp. Meanwhile a plan of which Afrasiab Khan is said to have been the contriver, was agitated in the councils of the confederates. They agreed to the propositions for peace, but, instigated by a revengeful spirit, descended to the perpetration of an atrocious act.

A general reconciliation of parties being agreed to, and properly ratified by the respective signatures, Prince Mirza Juwaun Bukht, accompanied by Pauly and Lutafut, left the city and proceeded to the confederate armies. But scarcely had the devoted victims entered the camp, when a party of horse, who had been placed in ambuscade, suddenly issuing from their concealment, attacked and dispersed the followers of the commissioners, seized and overpowered those unfortunate men, and by a bloody process struck off the head of Mr. Pauly, and deprived Lutafut of life. The army of the rebels then attacked the battalions of the commissioners, whom as they were totally unprepared for the treachery, were easily overpowered. To the prince they promised

implicit obedienee, and shortly after in his company entered the city in triumph.

Shah-Aulum, thus reduced, was constrained to receive the rebels with apparent satisfaction and marks of respect. Mirza Shuffee was reinstated in his authority, and the other chiefs were honoured with titles and dignities.

From the ascendancy thus acquired by Mirza Shuffee, had he pursued an upright conduct, there was every prospect of his authority being permanent. But it soon appeared that the late reconciliation of the contending chiefs was temporary and insincere. The prime minister, in order to restore tranquillity to the province of Agra, which had suffered much by the tumults before mentioned, resolved to repair thither in person: he took with him the prince Solimaun Shekoo. We may recollect the stipulations made in the treaty of Agra the preceeding year. Mahomed Beg Khan Hamduni, who deemed himself the principal instrument in the restoration of the minister's authority, now called on him for the performance of his agreement. He demanded his share of the lands of the late Zulficar Al Dowla. Mirza Shuffee, whether he thought his authority too firmly established to be again shaken, or jealous of divided sway, refused compliance with the terms of the treaty.

Mahomed Beg Khan, justly incensed at this breach of faith, gave vent to the natural ferocity of his disposition, and resolved to take a severe revenge. It is probable, however, that the minister might have warded off the blow, had he not by an act of equal folly and injustice, hurried the whole body of the Mogul nobility into acts of open hostility. It will be necessary here to develop the causes of sudden revolution which led to the extinction, not only of his authority, but his life. To an unbounded ambition, Mirza Shuffee unfortunately added an inextinguishable avarice: actuated by that unworthy passion, he in a fatal moment determined to resume those lands which had been granted by the late Nujuff Khan as *Jaiedad* for the maintenance of the troops of the different Mogul lords. In lieu of these, he determined it should henceforth be disbursed by monthly payments from the royal treasury. His commands, when notified to the different chiefs, excited universal murmurings and discontent. But Mirza Shuffee enforced obedience to his orders.—Fatal were the consequences which

followed this rash and impolitic measure. The commander, irritated at the unworthy treatment, with justice deemed their services merited a return far different ; and under the impulse of passion, hurried themselves into the commission of a crime of the blackest dye. Afrasiab Khan, Mahomed Beg Khan, and other lords, entered into a conspiracy to assassinate the minister ; and bound themselves, after the perpetration of the deed, to place Afrasiab Khan in the authority of the deceased, and to restore the Jaieddads. The more effectually to conceal their intentions, it was agreed to invite Mirza Shussee, who was by this time advanced towards Agra, to an amicable conference, to reconcile and settle their mutual disputes.

On the 23rd of September of the current year, the two armies met, and encamped in the neighbourhood of Deig. Though the conspiracy we have before related, had been planned with the utmost secrecy and caution, it, by some means or other, reached the ears of Mirza Shussee's friends : and previous to the intended interview, the prime minister was warned of the treacherous designs of his enemies. But Mirza Shussee rejected the information as a concerted falsehood ; and totally regardless of personal safety, accompanied by a few follower, he proceeded on his visit. The army of Mahomed Beg Khan was drawn out as if ready to receive and compliment the minister. Each of the chiefs was mounted on his elephant ; as the animal on which Mirza Shussee rode approached the other, Mahomed Beg Khan, conformable to established usage, rose up, saluted, and embraced his rival ; but in the performance of that act, having seized hold of the minister's right hand, which was the signal agreed on, Mirza Ismael Beg, his nephew, who sat in the Khawass*, plunged a dagger into the body of the devoted victim. He groaned, fell back, and expired. A desperate action ensued between the armies ; but at length Afrasiab Khan, exerting his influence, persuaded the troops of the late minister to join the confederates. The body of Mirza Shussee was taken up by his followers, and interred in the fort of Deig.

Of this event Afrasiab Khan having sent notification to Delhi, an answer was received, expressive of the king's approbation of

*The Khawass is the bark seat on an elephant, in which a person is usually placed with a *Chowri*, or fan. At court, and amongst the nobility, it is deemed the highest honour to be placed there.

the deed. At the same time a firmaun arrived, which constituted Afrasiab Khan, Ameer Al Omrah, and moreover gave permission to appropriate to his own use the effects of the late minister. Finally, Afrasiab Khan and prince Solymaun Shekoo were ordered to repair to the capital with all possible expedition.

The indifference with which this important trust was conferred upon Afrasiab, creates a suspicion that the fate which had befallen Mirza Shuffee was not disagreeable to his majesty. A generous mind, on this surmise, deplores the humiliating situation of a descendant of Timoor, sanctioning acts disgraceful humanity, and subversive of the principles of moral and social order.

When Mirza Shuffee was assassinated, his brother, Zein Al Abudeen Khan, was governor of Meerut. The king, tenacious of the power which he derived from that situation, determined upon his removal. A mandate was accordingly issued for that nobleman's appearance at court. He was received with respect. Shah-Aulum, after condoling with him on the death of his brother, intimated to him the necessity there was to resign his government. Zein Al Abudeen, who was a man of impatient temper, in secret burnt with indignation at this unworthy treatment; at the time, however, he said nothing; but on retiring from the hall of audience, he repaired to his own palace, whence he privately departed. Sensible that this conduct would enrage the king, he hastened to Meerut; and determined to resist the royal authority, he there collected around him his friends and dependants.

Intelligence of this defection reaching Afrasiab Khan, he assembled the army, led it to Meerut, and invested the town. He had determined to have punished the rebel in the most exemplary manner; this determination was overruled by the advice of his confidential officers. They represented that his power in the state was as yet infirm, and it therefore became him first to make overtures for negotiation, to which in all probability, Zein Al Abudeen would assent. Nor were they deceived in their conjectures. Intimation being given, a treaty was set on foot; and Zein Al Abudeen consenting to submit to his majesty's clemency, was pardoned. He was received at court with honour, and a stipend out of the royal treasury was allotted for his support.

The prime minister returning to Delhi, was received with great distinction. He answered Shah-Aulum with protestations of perpetual attachment; and as proof, presented his majesty with an

offering of three lacks of rupees, and some valuable Persian horses.

Cuttub Al Dowla was now sent to command in Meerut ; and Nujuff Cooli Khan, son-in-law to the late minister, who had till now resided at Meerut, was directed to remain at court.

In the beginning of 1784, Major Brown, who had been commissioned on a deputation to the king by the supreme council of Calcutta, arrived at the capital. The Major was received with high respect ; and in behalf of the British government, presented Shah-Aulum a handsome paishcush.

The arrival of this deputation excited various emotions in the minds of the Delhians ; some were of opinion that the period was at hand when Shah-Aulum would return to the protection of his oldest and, in truth, his best friends, the English : others again conjectured that the intent of the embassy was, to arrange with the minister the concerns of the royal family. These, during the late commotions, had arisen to a height which was truly distressful. But the real cause of Major Brown's arrival* was in consequence of orders he had received from his government, not to decline any overture that might be made for affording a military aid to the royal cause. The Seiks had for several years back, by their predatory incursions into Doo Ab and Rohilcund, excited alarm in the government of Asuf Al Dowla ; and Mr. Hastings, the British governor, with his usual discernment, deemed the exertions of the court of Delhi might, at the present juncture of affairs, prove a beneficial counterpoise to the rising power of the Seiks.

Many days had not elapsed since the arrival of Major Brown, when an event occurred which created much confusion in the palace, and led, in its future consequences, to concerns of momentous import. The heir apparent, prince Mirza Juwaun Bukht, disgusted at the daily insults he received from the minister, resolved to throw himself on the protection of the vizir and the English: he hoped thereby to procure ease to himself, and an alleviation to the distresses of his family. Escaping from the palace at midnight, he crossed the Jumna, and repaired to Lucknow. But as the fortunes of Mirza Juwaun Bukht will hereafter be detailed in their proper order, it is here only necessary to point out the immediate effects of his flight from the

*See the proceedings of parliament on the trial of Mr. Hastings.

capital.

Afrasiab Khan, conscious of the ill treatment of the unhappy prince had, through his means, endured, was fearful of the vizir's* resentment. He thought, therefore, that the most effectual means of obviating this would be, to persuade the heir apparent to return to Delhi. Accordingly, he, in the king's name, sent letters to the vizir and Mr. Hastings, who was then at Lucknow, demanding, in terms most peremptory, the immediate return of the fugitive prince. Although Shah-Aulum, by affixing his seal to the dispatches, apparently sanctioned the demands of his minister, it is certain, that in his own mind he was not averse to the escape of his son. If, indeed, his unhappy situation be thoroughly considered, it is not to be wondered that he should endeavour by any means in his power to obtain relief.

Some days after the departure of the letters before mentioned, Major Brown, the British Ambassador, was requested to proceed to Lucknow. He accordingly repaired thither. Afrasiab Khan deeming his authority fully established, now threw off the mask, and exhibited himself in his natural colours. He first proposed to the king to march to Agra, the object of which he affirmed was the restoration of that province to order. Had he rested here, it would have redounded to the honour of Afrasiab; but impelled by a jealousy against Mahomed Beg Khan totally unwarrantable, he, at the close of the conference, in vehement language urged the king to revenge the assassination of the late minister in the punishment of Mahomed Beg. His majesty perceiving the invidious drift, turned from the minister with coldness, and retired into his haram.

The source of this extraordinary demand may, without difficulty, be traced in the rivalship of the two chiefs. Mahomed Beg Khan, though certainly guilty of an atrocious act, deserved not punishment from the hands of Afrasiab. It has before been seen, that the minister himself, in conjunction with the Mogul Sirdars, had urged and stimulated him to the deed; and for this he was now to become a sacrifice at the shrine of his imperious coadjutor.

Astonished at the king's abrupt departure, Afrasiab Khan,

*Asuf Al Dowla.

in sullen silence, retired to his own palace. Giving loose to his resentment, he there determined on a measure equally violent and unjust. At the conference above mentioned, the Nawaub Mujud Al Dowla had been present. That nobleman having endeavoured to dissuade the king from his intended expedition to Agra, the officious remark passed not unnoticed by the haughty spirit of Afrasiab. He directed Nujuff Cooli Khan, his dependant, to lead a party of guards to the palace of Mujud Al Dowla, and seize his person. His orders were obeyed with alacrity, and the unfortunate man again found himself in the course of a few short hours reduced from affluence and command to penury and a prison. His property was seized, and converted to the minister's use. Mujud Al Dowla was afterwards confined in the fort of Agra, where he died in 1788; not much regretted, except by Shah-Aulum, whose confidence he had so frequently abused by the commission of oppressive acts upon his subjects. He was an intriguing artful courtier, avaricious, and insolent. Shah-Aulum, when informed of this outrage, was filled with the deepest indignation. He resolved therefore, at all events, to throw himself into the hands of the Marhattas; and by a foreign aid, to relieve himself from the insupportable insults daily offered him by his own subjects.

CHAPTER VIII

Rise and Progress of MADHAJEE SINDIAH, Ruler of MALWAH, from the Establishment of his Family in that Province until his interference in the Politics of the Court of DELHI—Intrigues of AFRASIAH KHAN—His Death and Character—SINDIAH is made Prime Minister.

FROM the preceding scenes of party violence, the reader will with pleasure follow history through the more edifying detail of geographical information. We shall proceed, therefore, to take a retrospective view of the Malwah province, in its fluctuating state under a succession of rulers. But the considerable influence acquired by Madhajee Sindiah in the politics of Hindostaun, previously demands attention to the rise and progressive fortune of this extraordinary man.

Madhajee Sindiah Putteel Bahadur was descended from a Rajpoot family. His father, Ranojee Sindiah, was an officer in the service of Bajerow who, in the latter end of the reign of Rajah Sahoo, was Paishwah of the Marhatta state. The supineness and effeminacy of the court of Delhi, and the distracted state of the empire toward the close of the reign of Mahmud Shah, rendered easy the subjugation of the Malwah province. On that expedition Ranojee Sindiah accompanied the Paishwah. The services and ability displayed by Ranojee during the campaign, were rewarded with the management of the province, which was confirmed in jagheer to his descendants by Rajah Sahoo. Ranojee had four sons : Appagee, Tagee, Tookagee, and Sindiah. Appagee was slain in a civil broil in the Jynaghur province; Tookagee and Tagee perished in the memorable battle of Panniput in 1762.

Sindiah, in that action, though only seventeen years of age, displayed a genius and spirit which well foretold his future greatness; being desperately wounded, and unable to follow the route of the few survivors of the Marhatta army, he was secretly taken care of in the camp of the Abdallee. Recovered from his wounds, he was privately removed from this asylum, and by his protectors conveyed into Deccan. He then assumed the

government of his patrimonial estate of Ougein. From his intense application to business, aided by the endowments of a vigorous mind, he soon acquired considerable influence in the Marhatta state; and was early considered as one of the principal Jagheer Dars. In 1770, he accompanied Holkar and Beesajee into Hindostaun, where his actions have been recorded in the preceding pages.

Malwali*, the greater part of which is the inheritance of the Sindiah family, is in length two hundred and forty-five coss, in breadth two hundred and thirty. On the north it is bounded by the Agimere Soobah; on the south by Baglanah; on the east by part of Agra and Allahabad; and on the west by Guzerat. The principal rivers that flow through this fertile and extensive tract, are the Chumbul, the Sind, and the Nerbuddah; but it is watered by many other smaller streams. Though higher than the rest of Hindostaun, the land of Malwah is in general fertile; in it are reared numerous herds of cattle; and it abounds in opium, indigo, and tobacco.—In former times the revenues were computed at four millions sterling; this, of late years, however, has been much reduced; and even Sindiah, in his collections, can realise only a million.

The Patan princes of the race of Khuljee having conquered that province from the Hindoos, fixed their seat of government at Mando*. It was during the long and glorious reign of the renowned Akbar, that Malwah was gradually alienated from the Patans.—Having annexed it to his empire, it remained in his family until the close of the reign of Mahmud Shah.

The Zemindars and soldiers of fortune here, as in other parts of the empire, during this turbulent period, divided amongst them the different provinces. Out of these arose several independent states; those states encroaching upon the imperial authority, by degrees threw off all but a nominal allegiance to the house of Timoor.—Hence, the authority of the Soobah became frequently circumscribed to the environs of that city, which he chose

*For the following detail of the Malwah province, the author is happy to confess his obligations to Major Charles Reynolds, surveyor general on the Bombay establishment, who furnished him with the materials collected by himself on the spot.

*A large city, fifty miles distant from Ougein.

for his residence. The Rajah of Chundeely, descended from the ancient princes of the country, seized on the north-east parts; the southern were occupied by the Keeches. To the westward the petty Zemindars of Annuntwarah and Sooudunah assumed the stile of independent princes; and in the centre of the province was erected the nabobship of Bopaul.

Whilst these rebels were bidding defiance to the royal authority, a new and more formidable enemy, the Marhattas, soon destroyed the hopes of those petty sovereigns, and made themselves masters of the whole province. At this period, Kullich Khan, the famous Nizam Al Mooluk, was governor of Deecau. He also, disgusted at the levity which stigmatized the councils of the court of Delhi, resolved to render himself independent. To avert, however, the vengeance of the royal arms, he secretly invited the Marhattas to an invasion of the Malwah province. Delighting in predatory warfare, the proposal was received with avidity. The immense Marhatta host was commanded by Bajerow, Rajah Gheerdir directed the imperial forces. Desperate was the battle which soon ensued; but victory declaring for the invaders, with incredible rapidity they overran both Malwah and the rich province of Guzerat; and their victorious arms were afterwards carried to the confines of Beianah and Agimere.

The petty sovereigns who had assumed independancy, in consequence, obliged to yield up the best part of their possessions, were reduced to the payment of an annual tribute; but the Nabob of Bopaul and a few other Rajahs were still permitted to retain a part of their territories, and to exercise over them an authority subordinate to the controul of the Marhatta government.

Malwah was then divided into three shares: the first was allotted to Bajerow; the second to Marhatta prince, Rajah Sahoo; the third to the family of Mulhar Holkar. Sindiah, as we have seen, inherited that part of the province bestowed on his father by Bajerow. But by a train of successful operations, he was enabled to appropriate to himself a considerable portion of the Circar lands. Tookajee Holkar, who inherits the third division of the Malwah province, since his accession has resided at Indore, a city thirty miles distant from Ougein.

Ougein, the modern capital of Malwah, is situated on the eastern bank of the Siprec river, in lat. 23.12 N. and long. 75.58. W. The city is, from its antiquity, of considerable note in the empire. The monuments which it exhibits of the piety and superstition of its Hindoo sovereigns, are still regarded with veneration ; nor have the Patan emperors contributed less to its embellishment. Among a variety of grand and a venerable ruins, travellers mention with applause an edifice erected by Nassir Al Deen Khulje in the ninth century of the Mahomedan era. About one mile and a half east of the city is a large gloomy building of an octangular form, and the whole of the materials of stone. Its foundation is an artificial island, which is formed by a deviation of the western channel of the stream in the bed of the Sippree, and is connected with opposite bank by a stone bridge of sixteen arches. The building consists of a variety of spacious chambers, constructed upon a level with the water : throughout these, by means of reservoirs, the water is conveyed in different channels, and hence, by artificial cascades, discharges itself into the Sippree in pleasing murmurs. The apartments in this delightful retreat are cool and salubrious. To each recess are fastened rings of iron for the purpose of attaching purdahs, or screens made of the aromatic root called Khuss. These, when sprinkled with water from without, not only give an agreeable coolness to the entering air, but entirely exclude the inclemency of the sultry season. We have before remarked that, among persons of distinction, this luxury is common throughout Hindostaun. Into these watery abodes, when desirous of repose, and fatigued with the toils of state, the princes of the house of Khuljee were accustomed to retire. During the periodical rains, the lower parts of this building are entirely overflowed, and an amazing force of water acts against it ; but so great were the pains bestowed on its erection, and the materials of such wonderful solidity, that after a lapse of three centuries it remains entire, and still continues to attract the admiration of the spectator.—We resume, after this digression, the thread of our narration.

Sindiah, on his return from Hindostaun in 1774, employed his utmost exertions to extend his influence, and enlarge his patrimonial territory. Bold and aspiring in his views, he pursued the plans of his future aggrandisement with ardour and unremitting perseverance. He had greatly increased his revenues, and rend-

ered his country highly flourishing, when six years afterwards was formed the grand Marhatta confederacy. Joining with that league, he became a principal actor in the scene, in which it was vainly hoped to have overthrown the British empire in the East. It was, however, happily dissolved, and the scheme rendered abortive, by the promptitude and vigour of the British councils, aided by the brilliant ascendancy acquired by British arms under auspices of Cootc and Goodard.

Sindiah, who during that memorable contest had exhibited the conduct of an active and able leader, on its conclusion, turned his arms against Golud*. In 1782, at the head of a numerous and well-appointed army, he entered that province for a second time, and with a fairer prospect of success than in his former expedition.

The reigning prince, Rajah Chutler Sing, fearful of the issue, endeavoured, by soliciting an alliance with the British government, to avert the impending storm. Accordingly, by his ambassador at Calcutta, in recompence for an interference of the English in his behalf, he promised an annual Nuzeranah of four lacs of rupees. It does not however appear that such an alliance was, at the present juncture, deemed acceptable to the Supreme Government of Bengal. Although Sindiah's extensive views of conquest, and the notoriety of his ambition, were to the council objects of sufficient magnitude to excite alarm, still the fidelity which that prince had invariably observed in his transactions with the British nation, his uprightness, and, above all, his faithful and steady adherence to treaties, had impressed the minds of government with sentiments highly favourable toward him.

The alliance with the Ranah was, therefore, rejected : but it was deemed eligible by the council to endeavour effecting an amicable compromise betwixt the contending parties. Consonant to this resolve, Mr. David Anderson*, the British ambassador at

*A province situated about sixty coses west of Agra, and originally ruled by Rajpoot princes.

To the Zealous and faithful exertions of this gentleman, as well as those of his brother, Mr. James Anderson, who succeeded him, may be chiefly ascribed the conciliatory conduct of the Marhatta government, at a momentous and interesting period, in entering into an alliance which has hitherto been preserved with fidelity on their part. See the reports of the select committee on the second Marhatta war.

Sindiah's Durbar, was directed to ascertain his sentiments in regard to the proposed mediation. But Sindiah, either in consequence of repeated breaches of faith on the part of Chutter Sing, was animated with a spirit of personal resentment against him ; or, impelled by a desire long entertained of extending his dominions, declined the proffered interference. After a desultory warfare of two years, the reduction of Gohud was finally effected ; and, on the 24th of Nov. 1784, Rajah Chutter Sing surrendered himself to his opponent.

Sindiah having thus acquired the province of Gohud, now directed his whole attention to the affairs of Delhi. During the transactions before mentioned, he had maintained a correspondence with Mirza Shuffee Khan. That nobleman entering into his views, had promised him his entire assistance and support in its execution. But on his arrival on the north of the Chumbul with an army of thirty thousands men, Sindiah heard of the death of his associate. Deeming the opportunity for which he had so long and so anxiously fought, now arrived, he, from his present station, dispatched letters to the court of Delhi. In these, after declaring his intentions of restoring the royal family to its former splendour, he made a request to Shah-Aulum to remove with his court to Agra ; at which place, the Marhatta chief informed his majesty, he would, to the satisfaction of all parties, arrange and settle the affairs of the empire.

Afrasiab Khan, on receipt of these letters, laid them before the king, and urged his majesty to an immediate compliance with the contents. Shah-Aulum, who for a long time possessed neither influence nor authority, assented to the proposal, and the royal tents were ordered to be got ready. The prime minister, after nominating Nujuff Cooli Khan to the government of the fort and city of Delhi, pitched his camp without the walls. On the ensuing day, the army took the route to Agra.

The high pitch of authority to which the minister had arisen, gave him entire controul in the state ; and whilst his order of march in this expedition was marked with the most luxurious extravagance, inconvenience and distress attended the family of his sovereign.—On the march, the prime minister received letters from the vizir and the British governor general*. Actuated by

*Mr. Hastings

the impulse of a liberal mind, those powers, on the present occasion, urged in the most pressing terms the release of the Nuwaub Mujud Al Dowla ; and recommended to the minister a different treatment to his unhappy sovereign. But the unrelenting spirit of Afrasiab was not to be softened ; intreaties or threats were to him alike indifferent. Mujud Al Dowla was ordered into a closer confinement ; and Afrasiab Khan, leading the empcror in triumph, encamped under the walls of Agra.

Mahomed Beg Khan Hamdani had taken a strong position about forty miles from that place, and the Marhatta princce was now advanced to Futtu Pore.

Such was the situation of the contending parties, when Sindiah opened a negotiation with Mahomed Beg. Anxious to acquire a thorough knowledge of the sentiments of the Mogul nobility, and to learn the extent of their different views and expectations, Sindiah proceeded in a manner cautious and circumspect : as a preliminary step, he called on Mahomed Beg to exculpate himself from the charge of murder. In extenuation of his crime, that nobleman threw the odium of the transaction upon the prime minister. He had alleged, and truly, that Afrasiab Khan had not only instigated him to the deed, but bound himself by the most solemn ties to support him in it when executed. Regarding himself, Mahomed Beg professed a ready obedience to the commands of the Marhatta, and that if he would so far interfere as to procure the king's pardon, he would henceforth attach himself to his fortunes. Meanwhile he declared his intention of remaining quiet in his present position.—To these insinuations, Sindiah in reply declared that, satisfied with such a declaration, Mahomed Beg might rely on his interfercne in procuring the pardon required. Whilst the above negotiation was pending, Afrasiab Khan beheld the motions of Sindiah with a watchful and jealous eye : suspecting an accession of influence from the submission of Madomed Beg, he prepared to circumvent it by a counter treaty. But these designs were frustrated by an accident which at once put a period to his ambition and his life.

To relate with precision the particulars of this event, we must recur to the situation of Zein Al Abudeen. That nobleman, the reader will recollect to have been forgiven: but Afrasiab well kno-

wing his disposition, would not be easy while he remained at liberty; on this account he had hitherto been detained in, what by the natives of Hindostaun was deemed, an honourable confinement. Upon the first letters, however, that passed between Afrasiab Khan and Sindiah, at the particular request of the latter, Zein Al Abudeen was released. He appeared in the camp, but resolved to be avenged of his brother's death. An occasion soon offered. In the month of November, an interview took place in the vicinity of Futty Pore between Sindiah and Afrasiab Khan. After the usual interchange of civilities, Sindiah returned to his own camp. Rajah Himmut Behadur and several other officers of the army having likewise taken leave, there remained in the tent Zein Al Abudeen and Afrasiab Khan.

Zein Al Abudeen, whose plan was already formed, now entered into conversation with the minister. In terms apparently cordial, and in the most respectful manner, he proposed to him for the future to live upon a more amicable footing ; expressed his wish that all former differences should be forgotten, and urged the necessity of henceforth consolidating their mutual interests.

Suspended at the unexpectedness of this address, Afrasiab Khan remained for a time absorbed in silence. But about to have replied, Zein Al Abudeen, with fury in his countenance, rose from his seat, a signal, upon which Maddoo Beg came up, and plunged his dagger into the breast of the devoted minister. He expired on the spot.--A violent tumult ensuing, several persons were slain ; but Zein Al Abudeen having effected his escape, fought and found protection in the camp of Sindiah.

Thus perished Afrasiab Khan, a man of turbulent disposition and impetuous manners ; but with great personal bravery, he possessed abilities for war. Zulficar Al Dowla having adopted him into his family, trained him to arms. Considerable were the services which he rendered the state, whilst under the guidance of his patron ; deprived of his salutary counsels, the passion of Afrasiab, always uncontrollable, hurried him into measures the most bold and sanguinary. The cause of his ruin may be traced to his unguardedness in permitting Zein Al Abudeen to recover his liberty. In that instance circumspect, he might perhaps have terminated his career happily.

The conduct of the Marhatta chief in countenancing Zein Al Abudeen after the perpetration of so foul a crime, calls loudly for the severest reprehension ; it is a strong presumptive proof that he was accessory to the deed. In recording the transactions of a wicked and dissipated court, the impartiality of history demands the strictest scrutiny ; whilst the multiplied assassinations which, in later times, have disgraced the politics of Delhi, in a reflecting and susceptible mind, must excite horror.

When the tumult occasioned by Afrasiab Khan's death had subsided in his camp, Hinmut Behadur and the Mogul officers, as if by preconcerted agreement, repaired to the tents of the Marhatta chief. After complimenting him on the death of his rival, they assured him of their unanimous support in his administration of affairs: they doubted not but his majesty would confer on him the office of Ameer Al Omrah, for which he was so eminently qualified. These assurances Sindiah received with real satisfaction; and the two armies having joined, he led the united forces to Agrah. We must now for a while turn aside to the situation of the king, who, during the late negotiations, had remained in the fort of Agrah.

The Nawaub Mujud Al Dowla, who, as before remarked, was confined by order of the late minister, hearing of his rival's death, persuaded the Killadar of Meerut to connive at his escape. This being effected, he, in company with Guttub Al Dowla, visited the king. Shah-Aulum received him with kindness, and directed him to remain near the presence. This would in all probability have led to an immediate return of his honours and employments, had not his enemy, Shuja Dil Khan, governor of Agrah, in conjunction with Rajah Dajeram, endeavoured to impress the king's mind with suspicions of his fidelity. But their malice failed of effect; for the king, convinced that there was no reason to suspect Mujud Al Dowla of any disloyal intentions, heard their remonstrances with disgust, and commanded them to desist.

But the insolent manner in which they had urged their demands, convinced Shah-Aulum that he was entirely in their power; and, having little to hope for any respect from them in future, he resolved to quit Agrah altogether. The arrival of

Sindiah would, he hoped and expected, speedily afford him the means of punishing their presumption. But in order to leave no room for those noblemen to suspect his intentions, he ordered the greater part of his family to remain behind; then taking Mujud Al Dowla along with him, his household troops escorted him to Delhi.

Mahomed Beg Khan, to whose situation we must now recur, remained, during the late transactions, in his entrenched camp. Sindiah, on Afrasiab's death, wrote to Mahomed Beg to repair to Agrah. A conference ensued, and a pension of 16,000 rupees per month was allotted for his support out of the revenues of Shekooabad. A few days after, Sindiah, with his usual policy, resolved to employ the abilities of his newly-acquired dependant on a distant expedition. By removing Mahomed Beg from the scene of action in Hindostaun, he effectually prevented any cabals for counteracting his own designs; and the probability of his being taken off while employed on active service was an additional motive in the mind of this politic chief. He therefore requested of Mahomed Beg to proceed to the conquest of Rhago Ghur, a strong fortress in Deccan, and bordering upon Sindiah's patrimonial estate. The country of Keetchwara, in which the before-mentioned fortress is situated, was then in a state of actual rebellion; and to Mahomed Beg was committed the double charge of reducing it under obedience to Sindiah and the subsequent management of the districts. Having made the necessary preparations for his departure, Mahomed Beg Khan, accompanied by 5000 men, proceeded on his expedition to Rhago Ghur.

The greater part of the Mogul nobility having by this time declared for Sindiah, he now repaired with confidence to the capital. His expectations were fully answered; for, whether Shah-Aulum, disgusted at the thralldom in which he had been held since the death of Nujuff Khan, expected by a change in the government to experience some repose, or whether he, on this occasion, made a virtue of necessity, has not been clearly ascertained. To Sindiah, however, the event proved highly favourable. In the month of January, the Marhatta chief entered Delhi. He was received by the king with every demonstration of satisfaction, and treated with distinguished honour. In full Durbar, his majesty invested him with the office of Ameer

Al Omrah; and as an additional mark of favour, ordered a patent to be made out for the Paishwah of the Poonah Durbar, (under whose authority Sindiah professed to act) constituting him Vakeel Mutluck*, or Absolute Director General of the affairs of the Empire, with the Neabut of that office to Sindiah himself. On receiving his honorary dress, the new minister presented offering of five lacks of rupees, and retired from the presence.

*The office of Vakeel Mutluck in Hindostaun is paramount almost to sovereign authority, in as much as it empowers the person holding that office to raise troops at pleasure. It may appear remarkable that the Paishwah, who is the head of the Marhatta empire, should deem it any acquisition to his authority to receive an office from what he considered as coming from a nominal emperor of Hindostaun : yet it should be remembered, that however weak and impotent the present descendant of Timur is esteemed, it still continues, and ever will continue, a desirable object among the native powers to make use of his name towards completing their own aggrandisement.

CHAPTER IX

Occurrence at Court-War against JYPORE—Intrigues of the MOGUL Nobility—SINDIAH is defeated—Retires across the CHUMBUL—Intrigues of GHOLAUM CADIR KHAN—Account of BEGUM SOMROO—GHOLAUM CADIR KHAN—besieges the palace—He is repulsed and pardoned—Prince MIRZA JUWAUM BUKHT—Review of his Life-Death and Character.

DURING the late violent commotions, the provinces had fallen into disorder and decay. Their restoration was the first object to which the attention of the new minister was directed. The office of Dewaun, or superintendent of the revenues, had long been under the management of Daieram. His conduct of late had in many instances, been highly reprehensible; but his behaviour towards the king at Agra, determined Sindiah to remove him from office. The Dewanship was accordingly bestowed on Narain Dass, a person of capacity, and a skilful financier. Remaining a short time at Delhi, during which he disposed of several offices and employments, Sindiah assembled the army for the reduction of Agra.

The commencement of the current year was marked by the departure of the British governor general from India. In quiting this important trust, Mr. Hastings had the satisfaction to perceive himself followed by the unanimous good wishes of the princes of Hindostan, and the prayers of the natives. On the present occasion, the king, the vizier of the empire, the nazim of Deccan and the court of Poonah, all sent letters to Calcutta; in those were expressed their regret for the governor's departure, and contained moreover most ample testimonies of the high opinion they entertained of his abilities, integrity, and good faith*.

*Time, which removes the veil from the intrigues of policy, has evinced, that the ideas entertained by the natives of India, of that illustrious character, were just. His countrymen have beheld with a satisfaction, almost universal, the honourable award of a British Senate; an award no less honourable to the character of Mr. Hastings, than grateful to his mind, harassed by the degrading circumstances attendant on a prosecution, which is without parallel in the annals of mankind.

On the arrival of the army before Agrah, Sindiah summoned the governor to surrender the fort. He declared also, that by a resistance to the royal authority, the governor could have no hope for pardon. Treating the summons with contempt, Shujah Dil Khan prepared for a vigorous resistance. Sindiah commencing his approaches, two batteries were soon opened, and began to play upon the fort with considerable effect. Part of the curtain was thrown down, and several guns within dismounted. The governor in the meantime was not idle. He repaired the breaches with incessant activity, and by his own spirited behaviour animated the garrison. A month had elapsed when Shujah Dil Khan, foreseeing the ultimate reduction of the place, endeavoured, by an act of assumed respect, to mollify Shah-Aulum. That part of the royal family who, as before seen remained in the fort of Agrah, were now liberated, and sent with an escort to Delhi, which they reached without molestation.

Sindiah perceived that the siege advanced but slowly; he hoped therefore, that by opening a negotiation with some leading men among the besieged, to gain them over to his interests. The event answered his wishes. The Cutwal and several other officers having been bribed by a large sum of money and a promise of personal security, agreed to deliver up one of the gates of the fort. On a preconcerted signal, a select body of troops presenting themselves, were admitted by the treacherous Cutwal, and, before the governor or his associate Daieram could receive information, were overpowered and taken prisoners. They were immediately put into close confinement, and sent off to the camp. Sindiah, when possessed of the fort by not permitting it to be plundered, acted with becoming policy; he however, exacted considerable sums from the most wealthy inhabitants, which he distributed as a largess to the army. Of the whole of the possessions of the late Afrasiab Khan there now remained only Ali Ghur. That fort is situated in the upper part of the Doo Ab. It had been fortified with great care, and in it were deposited the family and treasures of the deceased Nuwaub, Jahaungire Khan, his brother, commanded in Ali Ghur. He had a strong garrison, and the siege was expected to be long and bloody. Early in the month of July of the current year Sindiah appeared before the place. Contrary, however, to all

expectation, it held out but a short time. It has been imagined that the fears of the women, for the preservation of their honour and effects, had inclined the Killadar to pacific measures. Certain it is that Jehaungire Khan, signifying his readiness to negotiate, a treaty was accordingly drawn up, and agreed to by the respective parties. To Khadim Hosseen Khan, eldest son of the deceased Nuwaub, a jaghire was allotted, amounting to a yearly revenue of a lack and a half of rupees. To the Begums were promised an honourable asylum, and to Jehangire Khan personal safety. It appears, however, that this treaty was very ill adhered to by the Marhatta Chief; for on the place being surrendered, the Begums and Jehangire Khan were sent under a strong guard to the fort of Gwalior, and there detained in confinement. The young Nuwaub, indeed, was received by Sindiah with great attention, and directed to remain in the royal camp. Sindiah then took possession of the fort, and with it the whole of the treasures of Afrasiab Khan, amounting, as it has been affirmed, in specie, jewels, and valuable articles to a crore of rupees.

The fall of Ali Ghur established the minister's authority on a firm and solid basis. Having before reduced under obedience the greater part of the Doo Ab and the countries south-west of the Jumna, he now found himself master of the whole of the possessions of the late Zulficar Al Dowlah, with an acquisition of revenue of two crore of rupees.

Intelligence of these important successes reaching Delhi, Shah-Aulum demonstrated his satisfaction by signal marks of favour. These were conveyed to the prime minister in three hundred superb Khilluts, to be distributed by him to the officers of the army. Nor was Sindiah less liberal in his return. Twelve lacks of rupees were allotted for the support of the king's household ; and he moreover sent rich present to court.

About this time the prince Juwaun Bükht, the heir apparent, then residing at Benares, forwarded to court a paishcush of one lack of rupees. This testimony of attention afforded great consolation to the king's mind. He now, for the first time since the death of Zulficar Al Dowlah, experienced some repose from the tumultuous cabals which had so long disgraced his court, and filled him with inquietude and anguish.

The departure of Mr. Hastings having occasioned some changes in the British administration, perspicuity requires that we bring under one head such transactions under that government as bear relation to the court of Delhi, during the current year. Sir John Macpherson succeeded Mr. Hastings in the chair. That gentleman, equally well inclined with his predecessor to pay every attention in his power to the king's interest, took an early opportunity of signifying the same. He confirmed to the Shahi Zadah the generous aid he had received the preceding year, and through him assured his majesty, that the British government would, on all reasonable occasions, extend their aid in support of his authority.

On the part of Sindiah Mr. James Anderson had succeeded his brother as ambassador to that Durbar. Major Brown, who had resided at court for some time past, was now recalled.

On the side of Oude, Major Palmer, who had resided at the court of Asuf Al Dowla the two preceding years, was now, at his own request, removed. To him succeeded Colonel Harper, who took an early opportunity of paying attention to the king, which he signified by letters accompanied on the part of the governor general by a paishcush suitable to the occasion.

From these digressions we return to affairs at court. After the capture of Ali Ghur, Sindiah repaired to Delhi, where, on his arrival, his whole care and attention were directed to restoring good order to the government, in all affairs, both foreign and domestic.

Shah-Nizam Al Deen, a confidential servant of the minister, was appointed to the superintendance of the royal household, to which his majesty added the government of the fort and city of Delhi. Toward the close of the current year died Zabita Khan, ruler of Sehaurunpore, a man, whose long and active life had been marked with a variety of alternate success and misfortune.

Taken comparatively with his father Najeeb Al Dowlah, Zabita Khan appears to have been of inferior capacity; his frequent rebellions, and the native turbulency of his temper, had totally estranged from him the king's mind, and the account of his death was received at court with indifference.

Zabita Khan was succeeded in his territories by his eldest son Gholaum Caudir Khan. He was a youth; proud, cruel, and

ferocious. His first act on assuming the government was the expulsion of his uncle Afzul Khan. This nobleman was at the time advanced in years, and admired for his exemplary manners. On his degradation Gholaum Caudir ordered his effects to be seized and confiscated. This bold assumption of the government, without consulting the court, or petitioning for a continuation of the Sunnud, agreeable to the established usage of Hindostaun, gave great offence to the king. But Gholaum Caudir, well aware of the consequences, prepared to support his rebellion by open violence. The fort of Ghose Ghur was accordingly put into a state of defence, and the means of assembling a considerable force was afforded him by the confiscation of his uncle's property.

In those acts Gholaum Caudir exhibited the first symptoms of that diabolical spirit which designated the actions of his future life. To him it was reserved to disgrace the house of Timoor, and to add the last outrage to the miseries of a long and most unfortunate reign. But previous to entering into a detail of the intrigues of Gholaum Caudir, we must for a while carry forward the affairs of Sindiah, and his operations with the neighbouring states.

Intelligence of the defection of Gholaum Caudir had scarcely arrived at court, when the prime minister was alarmed by an account of the rebellious designs of the Jynaghur prince. Pertaub Sing, informed of the late transactions at Ghose Ghur, had at the same time withheld his accustomed tribute. He thought the present opportunity favourable to a design long entertained of rendering himself independent. Sindiah prepared to subdue him by force but the advice of the Rajah's confidential servants prevented for the present matters proceeding to extremity. They, foreseeing ruin to his cause while Sindiah continued so powerful in the state, persuaded Pertaub Sing to desist. Their advice was attended with effect. The tribute was sent, and an additional paishcush which accompanied it appeared the resentment of Shah-Aulum.

Respected on all sides by the country powers, this fortunate Marhatta chief now saw with exultation his authority arrived at its highest extent. The factious spirit which had been exhibited by the Mogul nobility was quelled ; and Sindiah's subsequent conduct toward that powerful body contributed both to reconcile

them to his cause, and attach them to his person. Thus eligibly situated, had Sindiah properly appreciated his good fortune, he might have secured a power complete and unimpaired to the end. Unfortunately, however, a spirit of avarice gaining ground in his breast, inclined or impelled him to deviate from that line of liberal policy by which, at the first advance of his authority, he had been wisely guided. This deviation led in its consequences to events of a most serious nature, and had well nigh proved the utter destruction of the minister. But in order to explain the causes of an act which, in its execution, was followed by a revolution in the state, it will be here necessary to detail in a more particular manner the nature and tenure of the Jaiedads, or, as known in Hindostaun those lands which are appropriated for the support of the troops.

In most of the courts of India, certain portions of land are set apart for the payment of the army ; these are termed Jaiedads, a tenure which secures to the possessor a sure and easy collection : they are made over to the commanding officers, who, exclusive of the advantages the derive from these assignments in realising their pay, are moreover enabled to retain a numerous body of dependants. These increased their consequences in the state, and not unfrequently afforded them the means of personal safety, when their turbulent ambition led them to rebel against their sovereign. It was these Jaiedads that the Minister determined to resume ; and for the causes before mentioned, their resumption at this juncture was equally dangerous, impolitic, and unjust : yet did Sindiah persist ; and though having the examples of Mirza Schuffee and others of his predecessors before his eyes, he, with a pertinacity approaching to infatuation, carried his resolves into effect. Considerable murmurs there were, but the great force of Marhattas kept up by the minister, prevented for the present any open act of hostility on the part of the Mogul officers. In secret, however, fired with resentment, they resolved on vengeance. The blow was gradually preparing. About this time Naraieeu Dauss, who, since the death of Afrasiab Khan, had conducted the affairs of the Khalifa, was suddenly, without accusation, dismissed from his employment, and his property, to a large amount, openly confiscated for the minister's use. The vacant office was confirmed on Shah-Nuzam Al Deen.

Such repeated acts of injustice excited extreme disgust. Rajah Himmut Behadur, who had so eminently assisted the designs of Sindiah, was not to last to experience an ungrateful return. An account of his Jaiedad, together with certain balances, said to be due to the royal treasury, were demanded of him in the most peremptory terms. But Himmut Behadur, indignant at the controul attempted to be exerted over him, resolved to withhold all future support from his ungrateful associate. Quitting the court, therefore, he withdrew to his estate near Bindrabund, and prepared for resistance. The downfall of the minister's authority was accelerated by a rupture with the Rajah of Jynaghur, against whom a war now seemed inevitable.

Pertaub Sing, though himself of weak capacity, and enervated by effeminate pleasures, had nevertheless, during a long interval of peace, increased the revenues, and extended the commerce of his country. He now resolved openly to declare his independance of the court ; and having, as a prelude to his rebellion, withheld the customary tribute, he began to collect forces, and prepare himself for the consequences. But previous to entering into a detail of the war against Jynaghur, we must recur for a while to the situation of Mahomed Beg Hamdani, who bore a considerable share in that war. Mahomed Beg, the reader will recollect, had been sent into the country of Kitchwara, where having reduced the fortress of Ragho Ghur, and settled the affairs of the province, he remained in that station for three years. Sindiah now ordered him to the capital, where he arrived at the commencement of the current year. As he brought with him a considerable body of his Mogul troops, the minister received him in a manner apparently cordial ; but dreading his power and influence, whilst at the head of an army, endeavoured to persuade him to disband his troops. To this Mahomed Beg gave a positive refusal ; and the intelligence of the revolt of Pertaub Sing arriving at court, deterred the Marhatta prince from enforcing compliance. Mahomed Beg, who retained in his breast a deep resentment, was resolved, as opportunity should occur, of gratifying it to the full extent. He had since his return entered into a correspondence with the prince of Jynaghur, which was terminated by an alliance with that chief. Meanwhile Sindiah having made the necessary preparations for the campaign, committed the care of the capital to his deputy Shah Nuzam Al Deen, and marched towards Jynaghur. Pertaub

Sing, attended by a numerous army, which he had recruited by alliances with several of the neighbouring Rajpoot princes, was encamped on the frontiers of his dominions. The effect of that disgust, long entertained by the Mogul officers, now began to manifest itself to the detriment of the prime minister. Scarcely was he arrived in the presence of the enemy when he received information of a defection among his own troops. The Mogul nobility, headed by Mahomed Beg Khan, had secretly entered into engagements with Pertaub Sing, whose splendid offers of money and employment in his service at once gratified their avarice, and afforded them the means of being revenged for the indignities they had sustained from the Marhatta prince. Through the agency of Rajah Daieram a treaty was formally drawn up, by which it was settled, that on the approach of the minister's army, Mahomed Beg and other Mogul lords should join Pertaub Sing. Accordingly, attended by their whole force, they, in the face of Sindiah's army, went over to the enemy. Astonished, but not dismayed at this treacherous act, Sindiah with his remaining force hesitated not to give instant battle. The action which ensued was long and bloody ; but Mahomed Beg Khan Hamdani having been slain by a cannon ball, the Moguls received a check, and were thrown into some confusion. Pertaub Sing, informed of this accident, hastened to the spot, and conferred the command of the Moguls upon Ismael Beg, nephew of the deceased chief. Ismael Beg renewing the combat with ardour, soon recovered from the disorder and restored by success of the day. But the events would have still remained doubtful, had not some disciplined battalions, formerly in the service of Afrasiab Khan, at this critical moment, suddenly gone over to the enemy, by which the Marhattas were dispirited beyond repair. The affair was immediately decided ; Sindiah retreated from the field with expedition, and was obliged to take refuge in the fort of Alwar, the capital of his ally, the prince of Macheri. That chief received the fugitive with cordiality and respect ; but the severe check which Sindiah's authority had sustained in the loss of the late battle, and the dispersed state of the Marhatta army, convinced him that he could not long hold his situation at court. Collecting, therefore, the remains of his discomfited forces, he quitted Alwar, and retiring southward across the Cauminal, repaired to Gualior, there to wait for reinforcements from Deccan.

Had the Jynaghur prince on this occasion made a proper use of his victory, it is probable the Marhatta influence in Hindostaun would have been totally annihilated ; but content with having cleared his dominions of the invader, Pertaub Sing, after first detaching the Mogul force under Ismaeel Beg to besiege Agra, which place was still in the hands of the Marhattas, he himself returned to Jynaghur.

The fort of Agra was defended by Lackwajee, the Marhatta general ; he had with him a strong garrison, with abundance of provisions and every thing requisite to sustain the attack. But the inhabitants of the city, totally unprepared with any means of resistance, and intimidated by threats of military execution, quietly submitted on the first approach of Ismaeel Beg. That chief having laid the inhabitants under a severe contribution, now formally demanded a surrender of the fort, to which Lackwajee replying in the negative, Ismacel Beg commenced the siege.

Our attention must now be directed to the disagreeable situation into which the king had been thrown by the defeat and subsequent departure of the Marhatta army from Alwar. Prior to that event, Sindiah had received certain intelligence that the late desertion of the Mogul officers was owing to the intrigues of Rajah Daieram. Restless and turbulent in disposition, that nobleman was continually employed in fomenting the intrigues and reviving the discontent of the Mogul nobility ; and through his negotiation, the treaty before mentioned with Pertaub Singh had been effected. Sindiah, in acquainting his deputy, Shah Nuzzam Al Deen, with this circumstance, urged him to inflict exemplary punishment upon the traitor. His orders were obeyed ; for having caused Rajah Daieram to be arrested and brought to court, the ferocious deputy, even in the royal presence, gave orders for the unhappy wretch to be trodden to death under the feet of an elephant*.

Although, by this sanguinary deed, the deputy evinced a determined spirit to support the Marhatta authority, the accounts of his master's defeat and subsequent movement towards Deccan, prepared him to expect the most unpleasant issue. He accordingly put the fort and city of Delhi into the best possible state of defence. Of these precautions he soon found there was

*MS. Narrative of Syud Rezzi Khan.

sufficient need. Gholaum Cadir Cawn, who, as before remarked, had assembled an army, now determined to employ it in the advancement of his ambitious schemes. In a few days he arrived on the eastern bank of Jumna, and encamped opposite the citadel. The Rohilla chief, however, rested not his hopes of success wholly on arms. He had attached to his interests a person of great influence, as well in the councils, as over the mind of the king. This man was Munsoor Ali Khan, the Nazir*, who, bred up with Shah-Aulum, had, from his earliest youth, been a confidential servant, and loaded with a profusion of honours and distinguished kindness ; but forgetful of the duty he owed his sovereign, or gratitude due to his benefactor, the treacherous Nazir joined in the intrigues of the rebel. By the advocates for the Nazir it has been asserted, that hatred against the Marhatta government was the real cause of so extraordinary a conduct. From whatever motive it arose, certain it is, the Nazir was determined to introduce Gholaum Cadir into the administration ; and had accordingly sent letters to the rebel, urging his speedy appearance to demand of his majesty the vacant office of Ameer Al Omrah.

Great was the consternation occasioned at Delhi by the arrival of the Rohilla army ; but Shah Nizam Al Deen, assisted by Desmouk, son-in-law of Sindiah prepared to repel the invader. Unhappily for themselves, they despised the force of Gholaum Cadir ; and lulled into a fatal security, were contented with detaching a small force across the river, giving positive orders to the commanding officer to make an immediate attack on the enemy's camp. Of this inattention they, in the sequel, had cause to repent : the battalions, on the very first onset, were driven back and dispersed by the Rohillas with great loss ; they pursued them to the banks of the river, where, boats not being at hand, many threw themselves into the Jumna and perished miserably : the few who survived, ashamed to appear before the deputy, dispersed themselves over the city, and, as usual in Hindostan, began to plunder.

The deputy seeing the disastrous posture of affairs, and having by this time received intelligence of the traitorous designs of the Nazir, prepared by a speedy flight to save himself from the vengeance of the conqueror. Accompanied by Desmouk, he

*Superintendent of the household.

withdrew privately from Delhi. They repaired to the fort of Bullum Ghur, a place twenty miles south of the capital. Hera Sing, Killadar of that place, received them with humanity : but Shah Nizam Al Deen not deeming himself sufficiently safe at Bullum Ghur, retired from thence to Deig, which still acknowledged Sindiah's authority. Desmouk repaired to his father-in-law, whom he joined in the neighbourhood of Gualior.

On the flight of the deputy from Delhi being made public, Gholaum Cadir prepared to reap the fruits of his late success. He crossed the river with a select body of troops, and went direct to the king's palace. On his arrival, (agreeably to a concerted plan) he was introduced by the treacherous Nazir to the emperor. When honoured with the customary khillut, Gholaum Caudir preferred his petition for the investiture of the office of Ameer Al Omrah, and concluded with protestations of fidelity and attachment to his majesty's person. Shah-Aulum, perceiving himself without resource, was constrained, much against his inclination, to grant the request of this turbulent chief. Having acquiesced in the demand, the patent of creation was ordered to be got ready, and the Rohilla with a respectful obeisance retired from the presence.

Though by compulsory means Gholaum Cadir had thus attained the desired object, his power was by no means securely established. Several persons well attached to the Marhatta Government, as likewise to the king's person, still remained in Delhi. These, indignant at the unworthy treatment of their sovereign, and pitying his degraded state, resolved to make one effort for the restoration of his authority. Amongst others was the Begum Somroo, who at that time had considerable influence in the councils of Delhi. This lady, wife of Somroo, (a name too well known to Englishmen by his infamous conduct at Patna, now commanded the disciplined battalions which he had raised, and was moreover possessed of a considerable jaghire.

As this lady will bear a considerable share in the remaining transactions, we shall proceed to a concise retrospect of her situation and progress to authority.

Somroo, a German adventurer, whom a spirited author* has emphatically stiled "the bloody agent of the cruelties of

*Captain Jonathan Scott. Hist. of Deccan, Vol. II.

Meer Cossim," after the ruin of his master's affairs, retired into the Jaut province. He was there taken into the service of the late Zulficar Al Dowla, then in the plenitude of his power. In addition to his disciplined battalions, Nujuff Khan gave him the command of a body of Mogul horse; and for the support of the whole, assigned him the Pergunnah of Serdhauna, situated in the upper part of Doo Ab, as a Jaiedad. Somroo, previous to his death, which happened in 1778, married the daughter of a Mogul nobleman, whose family, from the unsettled state of the times, had fallen into distress. This lady, the present Begum, at the persuasion of her husband, embraced the Christian faith. She received from the king the title of Zeeb Al Nissaa, or, Ornament of the Sex; and on Somroo's demise, was continued in command over the troops, and confirmed by Nujuff Khan in the management of her Jaghire. In the centre of the ruined province of Sehaurunpore, in twenty-ninth degree N. latitude, and about sixty miles distant from the capital, rises the small but fertile principality of Serdhauna; it is bounded on the north by the town of Berhauna, on the east by Nowlah, west by the Hingun river near the town of Bernaba, and south by the district of Meerut. Its extent from north to south is thirty-six miles, and twenty-four from east to west. An unremitting attention to the cultivation of the lands, a mild and upright administration, and care for the welfare of the inhabitants, has enabled this small tract, to vie with the most cultivated parts of Hindostaun, and to yield a revenue of ten lacks of rupees per annum. The rivers Hingun and Crishna, which traverse this valuable jaghire, afford an ample supply of water; and the soil, naturally fertile, produces in abundance grain of all kinds, cotton, sugar-cane, and tobacco.

The town of Sedhauna, where the Begum generally resides, is of considerable extent, pleasantly situated, and commanding a fine view of the mountains of Himmeleh to the north-east. A fort near the town contains a good arsenal and foundry for cannon. Five battalions of disciplined Seapoys, commanded by Europeans of different countries, and about forty pieces of cannon of various calibres, constitute the force kept up by Begum Somroo. With these and about two hundred Europeans, principally employed in the service of artillery, she is enabled to maintain a respectable situation among the neighbouring powers.

While the surrounding lands exhibit the effects of desolation and distress, the flourishing appearance of this Jaghire impresses the mind of the traveller with sensations most gratifying; and it is upon this principle, that, deviating from the rigid line of historical precision, we embrace the opportunity of paying a tribute deservedly due to the spirit, activity, and talents of this noble lady. Endowed by nature with masculine intrepidity, assisted by a judgement and foresight clear and comprehensive, Begum Somroo, during the various revolutions above detailed, was enabled to preseve her country unmolested, and her authority unimpaired. In the successive administration of Zulficar Al Dowla, Mirza Shuffee, and Afrasiab Khan, she was confirmed in her possessions; and when Sindiah arrived at supreme power, he added to the extent of them by a grant of some other lands south-west of the Jumna. In the war against Pertaub Sing, Begum Somroo with her force was stationed at Panniput on the frontier, and in committing so important a trust to her charge was sufficient proof of the idea the Marhatta Chief had conceived of her capacity. Her conduct now evinced that that confidence had not been misplaced, and her spirited exertions in defence of the king's authority acquired deserved applause in the breasts of all. To this lady, then, Gholaum Cadir, on retiring from the presence, made offers of alliance. Aware of her influence at court, the artful Rohilla endeavoured, by the most studied respect to acquire her support in the extension of his usurped authority, assured her of a grateful return on his part, and finally proffered her an equal share in the administration of affairs. The prospect was tempting; but the Begum, well acquainted with the characteristic perfidy of the Rohilla, and resolved to defend her sovereign, rejected all his solicitations; and to give proof of her resolution to maintain the king's authority, she with her whole force repaired to the palace, and declared her intention of sacrificing her life in his majesty's cause. Her appearance gave great consolation to the king; and some other officers at the same time assembling troops, the court began to talk in a higher strain towards the rebel. Matters drew near to a crisis. Gholaum Cadir, baffled in his attempts to acquire the Begum's support, when informed of what had passed, was inflamed with savage fury. Going to his camp on the opposite bank of the Jumna, he thence dispatched a messenger to court,

demanding, in terms most peremptory, the immediate removal of Somroo's wife, adding, that in the event of non-compliance he should proceed to hostilities. His message having been treated with the contempt it deserved, Gholauim Cadir commenced a heavy cannonade upon the royal palace.* This was answered from some artillery in the fort, from the guns attached to the Mogul battalions in his majesty's service, and from a battery which had been erected with great expedition by Begum Somroo. Considerable damage was done to the palace by this outrageous insult; but the king's troops behaving with great firmness and spirit, it is most probable the Rohilla would have been compelled to retire. For the present, however, he was saved by the treacherous machination of his associate within the fort. The Nazir suddenly declared, that the royal treasury was exhausted, and refused to make any further disbursements for the troops. This untoward circumstance on so critical an occasion, greatly embarrassed his majesty's affairs; but as the urgency of the case required some immediate steps, the royal jewels and several articles of the household were desposited to raise a sum of money, which was immediately given to the soldiery. During this disgraceful scene, intelligence arrived that the Prince Mirza Juwaun Bukht, accompanied by a large army, was on his march to the capital. Of this event the Nazir conveyed private information to Gholauim Cadir, and foreseeing that the prince's arrival would disconcert his perfidious schemes, he strongly recommended the Rohilla to make immediate overtures for a pacification, to which he doubted not the King would agree. No time was to be lost; Gholauim Cadir, therefore, having signified to his majesty his sincere contrition for the late insult, presented a handsome paishcush in ready money, and moreover promised to restore all the royal lands in Doo Ab which he had lately usurped. To these offers Shah-Aulum, who knew the insincerity of the Rohilla, would not have consented, but, urged by the repeated solicitations of the Nazir, whom by a blind infatuation he deemed a faithful servant, at length acquiesced in the proposals. The terms being settled, an honorary dress was dispatched over the river to Gholauim Cadir Khan, who immediately after receiving it, struck his camp, and returned to Sehaurunpore.

*Synd Rezzi Khan's MS. narrative.

Scarcely had he departed when letters from the prince Mirza Juwaun Bukht arrived at court. In these, after acquainting his father of his rapid approach, he congratulated him on the prospect now afforded of punishing the rebel, and earnestly requesting the king not to enter into terms. The intimation arrived too late. To account for the prince's re-appearance at the capital, we must now proceed to a brief review of the occurrences of his life.

The death of Nujeeb Al Dowla in 1769, and the intrigues of the Marhattas having, as already related, recalled Shah-Aulum to his capital, the prince Mirza Juwaun Bukht from that period continued to reside with his father. During the various revolutions which occurred, the prince, by living in a retired state, and forbearing to interfere with public affairs, escaped from the perilous situation of the contending parties. But the conduct of Afrasiab Khan having, as before remarked, excited in his breast a just indignation, Mirza Juwaun Bukht resolved to seek an asylum at the court of Oude. In the year 1784 he effected his escape from the palace; and accompanied only by a few persons, he crossed the Jumna, and afterwards the Ganges, from whence he repaired to Rampore, the capital of Fizoolah Khan*. He was received by that chief with every attention due to his high rank, and treated with profuse hospitality. At his departure, the benevolent Rohilla directed a detachment of horse to accompany him to the vizir's frontier.

On his arrival at Lucknow, the prince was received by the vizir and the British governor-general, who had lately repaired to Oude, in order to make some arrangements in the affair of that province. At Mr. Hastings' suggestion, the vizir was induced, not only to extend his protection to the fugitive prince, but to allow him a provision of four lacs of rupees for the support of his establishment, and, moreover, furnish him with a house and every suitable convenience becoming his dignity. On the governor's departure for Benares, the prince, from motives of gratitude, resolved to accompany him to that place, where an event occurred which awakened his ambition, and determined him to return to his father's court. Hearing of the death of

*See a particular detail of the prince's escape, translated from the Persian language, by Captain Jonathan Scott, at the end of a interesting memoir written by Mr. Hastings, late governor-general of India.

Afrasiab Khan, the prince applied to Mr. Hastings to assist him with an armed force, to accompany him to Delhi, for the recovery of his authority; but the governor, not deeming himself authorised to interfere in the politics of Delhi, declined his assent. Mirza Juwaun Bukht, on the governor's departure for Calcutta, returned to Lucknow, where he had not long been, when a visible alteration was perceived in the behaviour of Asuf Al Dowla. The cause of the breach that ensued between them has not been correctly ascertained; by some it was alledged, that the want of punctuality in the payment of the prince's stipend, occasioned a sharp animadversion on his part; on the other hand it was affirmed, and probably with some reason, that the vizir was not altogether so well pleased at the diminution his own revenues sustained in granting the allowance before mentioned; but such sentiments were surely unworthy of the vizir of the empire, whose family had risen to power by the favour of his majesty's ancestors, and on which account the prince ought to have been treated with all imaginable kindness. Certain, however, it is, that the prince, in consequence of the slights which he received, determined him to remove from the court of Oude. In 1785, he repaired to Benares, and made another, though ineffectual, attempt to interest the British government in affording him assistance for the re-establishment of his authority at Delhi. His application failed of success; but Mirza Juwaun Bukht was assured that an asylum for himself and his family would always be readily granted within the company's territories, and as his highness declined returning to Lucknow, an order was issued upon the company's treasury at Benares, for the payment of the stipend which had been allowed him by the Vizir. In a situation so eligible, Mirza Juwaun Bukht, had he properly appreciated it, might have passed the remainder of his days in happiness and comfort; but a restless spirit of ambition impelled him to enter into the politics of the times, and in the end caused him inconceivable anxiety and the most bitter, though unavailing, regret. Not however, to anticipate our narrative, it is here sufficient to remark, that about this period Earl Cornwallis, who had been nominated to the supreme government in India, arrived at the city of Benares in his way to the vizir's court. To him, the Shah Zâda in the most pressing manner, renewed his solicitations for assistance from the English; but Earl

Cornwallis, adopting the same line of conduct as his predecessors was compelled to give a decided negative to his requests. The governor-general*, however, from motives highly to be commend-ed, seriously advised the prince to remain where he was; he assured him that the respect entertained by the British govern-ment towards his illustrious house, would ever be evinced, by rendering his highness such assistance as did not militate against the general line of policy which they had adopted in their con-cerns with the princes of Hindostaun, and, finally, his lord-ship concluded with observing to his highness, that the company's territories would always afford him a safe and honourable asylum.

Soon after this conference, the governor-general pursued his journey to Oude, whither the prince followed him. By the good offices of Earl Cornwallis, an interview between the prince and the vizir was effected, and an apparent reconciliation ensued: we affirm apparently only, for the subsequent conduct of the vizir, after Earl Cornwallis's departure, satisfied the prince that this re-conciliation was pretended. Abandoned by the court of Oude and finding he had nothing to expect from the English govern-ment, Mirza Juwaun Bukht now directed his whole attenton toward raising an army. Himmut Behadur, the Ghossien, and some other chiefs, having offered their services on this occasion, invited the prince to a conference on the plains of Bindrabund, in the neighbourhood of Agra. By their assistance, he, in a short time, assembled a considerable force, and being at the same time joined by the Mogul chief, Ismael Beg, the prince took the road to Delhi.

At the close of the current year he arrived in the neighbour-hood of the city, where he was met by his family and his brother, the prince Akbar Shah. The next morning he made his entry into the capital in great state, when Shah-Aulum, by the warmth of his embraces, rectified the joy which he experienced on the return of the heir apparent after so long and distressing an absence. The prince was immediately invested with the sole management of affairs; and there once more seemed a prospect of relief from that vexa-tion which the royal family had for a series of years undergone.

*MS. narrative of Syud Rezzi Khan;

The Marhatta usurpation was overthrown, and the rebellious chief of Schaurunpore had lately made ample submission : appearances so flattering were, however, by the machinations of an ungrateful and wicked man too soon overclouded. The Nazir, envious of the prince's authority, and constant in his attachment to the turbulent Gholaum Cadir, set at work every engine to sow dissention in the royal family, and alienate the king's mind from his son.

Some days after the prince's arrival, the Nazir, in concert with other lords whom he had gained over to his party, demanded in full Durbar the payment of certain arrears, which he alleged to be due to the troops from the royal treasury. The funds being at that time insufficient, he well knew this demand would embarrass the prince ; but, contrary to expectation, the prince, with much spirit, appealed to his father, and declared that as the assignments for these arrears were given during the Nazir's administration, he alone ought to be held responsible for their liquidation. To this opinion the king not only assented, but in severe terms commanded the Nazir to desist. Though baffled in a first attempt, the Nazir was firmly resolved to try a second ; in which, much to the discredit of Shah-Aulum, he was but too successful. Secure in the confidence of his sovereign, which he so shamefully abused, he had the audacity to insinuate to the king suspicions of the prince's loyalty. On this occasion, he observed to his majesty, that the high pitch of authority to which he had elevated his son, would no doubt inspire him with the design of rising still higher ; and that as the king was now rapidly advancing in years, and consequently incapable of vigorous exertion, the prospect of ascending the throne of Hindostaun was too seducing to be passed over by a person even less ambitious than his son : that his late efforts crowned with success, and being at the head of an army, gave him entire uncontrolled authority ; and these advantages were, when opportunity offered, powerful inducements, as well as fit instruments, for completion of his most aspiring views.

These insinuations, howeve unworthy, made a deep impression upon a mind debilitated by age, and obscured in its intellectual vigour and energy by a long series of despondency and misfortune. The audacious presumption of the interested servant was forgotten, and an eye of suspicion cast upon the services of a faithful and hitherto-beloved son.

The effects of the Nazir's treachery soon became apparent—Mirza Juwaun Bukht, who, since his return, had bestowed unremitting attention to the re-establishment, of good order and tranquillity at the capital, now solicited the king's permission to take the command of the army, and at the same time for his majesty to accompany it in person during its progress. He pointed out the propriety and good effect that might be expected from his majesty's making a circuit through the Doo Ab, which, he judiciously observed, would contribute much to calm the minds of the people, agitated as they had been during the late trouble ; and give additional consequences to his majesty's authority, now re-established under such happy auspices.

This proposal, however salutary and wise, was, to the astonishment of the prince, rejected by his father with the most frigid indifference. He now too plainly perceived that some secret machinations had been set on foot to instill into the king's mind the most base and unjust suspicions ; and therefore, disdaining to remain at court, where he was treated so unworthily, he determined to remove to a distance, in hopes that time and absence would contribute to efface such impressions from his father's mind. Having obtained the king's permission to repair to Agra, of which place he had lately been appointed governor, the prince, accompanied by his whole family and a small escort, quitted the court, to which never more returned.

Ismacel Beg, who was at that time besieging Agra, at first received the prince with the utmost respect and submission : but his subsequent conduct evinced, that in his heart this ungrateful chief was actuated by sentiments far different from the loyalty and fidelity due to his sovereign and perceiving the untoward state of his affairs, he looked only to the preservation of his own consequence. The prince, compelled by urgent necessity and the very low state of his finances, requested of Ismael Beg to adjust the affairs of the province, and to make over to him a suitable assignment for the support of the small force which had accompanied him from Delhi, and who, from long arrears, had become clamorous for pay. The Mogul chief lent a deaf ear to his solicitations ; and inflamed with pride, accompanied his refusal with disrespectful language to the prince. Disgusted at this treatment from a disobedient subject, Mirza Juwaun Bukht

quitted Agra, and repaired to the camp of Gholauim Cadir Khan, who was then in the neighbourhood of Deig : but meeting with similar treatment from that chief, and likewise narrowly escaping from a treacherous plot laid to entrap his person by the perfidious Rohilla, the prince now for ever relinquished all hope of re-instating himself in his authority. As a last mark of attachment and affection to his friends, he disposed of such effects as remained from the wreck of his fortunes, which he divided equally among them, after which, attended only by his family and a few select adherents, with an aching heart he once more took the road to Benares, and repaired to his former asylum among the English. The generosity of that nation again received him, and confirmed to him his former allowances under disposal of Mr. Duncan, the British resident. To follow his eventful life to its close, it is only necessary to remark that after some months residence at that place he terminated both his life and misfortunes. The circumstances which attended his death are particular. *About the middle of September of the current year he paid a visit to the shrine of a Mahomedan saint at the fortress of chunar; and on his return appeared much exhausted by the fatigues of the day and an intense hot sun. Towards midnight he grew worse; and though every assistance was afforded him, both by his own and European physicians, it proved of no avail. At the dawn of day he arose, and in great agitation proceeded to the apartments of his favourite concubine, where, on his arrival, he called for an infant child who was asleep, but before the child could be brought he was attacked with violent spasms, and during a short interval from pain, had just sufficient time to dictate a letter to the British governor-general recommending his family to the protection of the English nation, which being finished, he expired quietly a few minutes after in the forty eight year of his age. His remains were interred with every suitable attention and honours due to his high rank. Agreeably to his desire, the pension which had been allowed him was continued to his family.

Mirza juwaun Bukht Jehaundar Shah, though from capacity not fitted for the busy scenes of active life, nor possessing

*MS. Narrative of Syud Rezzi Khan.

any talent for government, was nevertheless irreproachable in his private character, and deemed by all an accomplished gentleman. To his friends he was constant, and to his dependants humane and benevolent. His domestic qualities and filial piety have been already exhibited to the world by testimony the most respectable* and in his disposition he possessed, in an eminent degree, that characteristic amiability, which successive historians have unanimously attributed to the princes of the house of Timoor.

*See Mr. Hasting's Letter from Lucknow, April 1784.

CHAPTER X

Arrival of RANAH KHAN in the DOO AB—Affairs in the JYPORE Province—Spirited Conduct of BEGUM SOMROO—Occurrences—ISMAEEL BEG is defeated—Function of that Chief with GHO-LAUM CAUDIR KHAN—Their Intrigues—SIALL-AULUM is dethroned—Occurrences—Conclusion.

SINDIAH, who, as related in the preceding pages, had retired after his defeat across the river Chumbul, and waited for a reinforcement in the neighbourhood of Gwalior. The new levies being arrived from Deccan at the commencement of the current year, he, at their head, entered the Doo Ab. The arrival of the Marhatta chief, while it encouraged the king to hope for relief from his distresses, at the same time, awakened the fears of the Mogul lords, who were well aware that their late conduct towards their sovereign would not be passed over with impunity. They connected themselves, therefore, by firmer bonds, and prepared to resist the Marhatta arms.

Ismaeel Beg still lay before Agra, but from the active vigilance of Lukwojee, the Marhatta general, he had hitherto made but slow progress in the siege of that place. During the transactions, affairs at court had assumed a different aspect; Shah-Aulum quitting Delhi, marched his army into the province of Jynaghur. Pertaub Sing, ruler of that country, in omitting to send to court the accustomed tribute, evinced his disaffection to the royal cause, and excited the resentment of the court. Pertaub Sing assembled his army on the frontiers, and appeared disposed to resist; but on the approach of the king's troops, he was, through the persuasion of Rajah Himmut Behadur, induced to offer terms of submission. The latter chief, who had great influence with the king, had the address to oppose his anger, and by promising, on the part of Pertaub Sing, a considerable sum in ready money, and a future increase of the tribute, he prevailed on his majesty to pardon his disaffection. As the king's necessities were then very great, these concessions were accepted without difficulty, and, to complete the reconciliation the Jynaghur prince was introduced into the royal camp,

cloathed in a splendid khillut, and afterwards, in an honourable manner, dismissed to his own capital.

These matters being arranged, Shah-Aulum proceeded on his route, and on his march continued to receive the submission of various inferior Zemindars, who, from their remote situation, had been enabled to withhold payment of the revenues, and, for a series of years, to bid defiance to the court with impunity. One discontented chief alone still withheld his allegiance; Nujuff Cooli Khan, who, it may be remembered, took an active part during the administration of the late Afrasiab Khan, was at this time in possession of the strong fort of Goeul Ghur. When summoned to surrender himself to Shah-Aulum, he peremptorily refused submission, and prepared himself for a vigorous resistance. Prior to the commencement of hostilities, an effort was made through the influence of the Nazir to effect an amicable accommodation: by his adviee, Nujuff Cooli Khan offered, if his majesty would condescend to confer upon him the vacant office of Ameer Al Omrah, to which, from his birth and connnections, he deemed himself entitled, he would with all humility, not only immediately deliver up the fort of Gocul Ghur, but, moreover, forward to court a Paishcush of six lacks of rupecs; he concluded his proposal by observing, that such a remark of the royal favour was the only means of preserving him from the resentment of his numerous and inveterate enemies who were bent on his total overthrow. These proposals were laid before a council assembled at that time, and the king, from a desire of preserving peace, would have acceded to the terms prescribed, but some leading men in the council inclined his majesty to other measures; they represented Nujuff Cooli Khan as a man void of honour or principle, whose present proposals were only a cover to designs of a more ambitious nature, and dictated by the most insidious poliey, that, when once firmly established in the high office of Ameer Al Omrah, and beyond the power of control, he would then treat his sovereign with his accustomed insolence and disrepect; they therefore urged his speedy chastisement. Swayed by these councils, the king, having first dismissed the messenger of Nujuff Cooli Khan, commanded an immediate investiture of the fort. The royal army at this time was composed of several battalions of Nejeebs, the body guard, called the red battalion; a very

considerable body of Mogul horse; and three disciplined battalions of Sepoys, which had belonged to the late Somroo, and were then commanded by his Begum in person, and furnished with a respectable artillery, served by European gunners. The headquarters of Nujuff Cooli Khan were at a village about one mile distant from the fort. The remainder of his force, under the command of Munsoor Khan, were stationed in Gocul Ghur. The rebel entrenchments being strongly fortified, his majesty directed Rajah Himmut Behadur and Shah Meer Khan, with a chosen detachment, to erect batteries against the village, and with the remainder of his army, he, in person, invested the fort of Gocul Ghur. The batteries of Himmut Behadur soon commenced a vigorous fire upon Nujuff Cooli Khan's intrenched post, but at the moment of making an evident impression, an unfortunate accident occurred which not only changed the face of affairs, but brought the king's person into the most imminent peril.

The officers who served in the camp of Himmut Behadur, disgusted at their absence from their comrades in the grand army, and harassed by incessant duty in the trenches, forgot the danger of their situation, and abandoned themselves to the most licentious excess; nor could all the admonition or threats of their commander prevail on them to desist; they passed the whole night in riot and debauchery, and the soldiers availing themselves of the pernicious example, indulged themselves in similar excess. Nujuff Cooli Khan, who was equally brave as vigilant, informed by his spies of what was transacting, resolved to profit by the enemy's neglect and folly: having selected a strong detachment of cavalry, he put himself at their head, and marching in silence out of his entrenchment, he fell with great violence upon the royal troops as they lay buried in sleep, and under the influence of their late debauch. A dreadful and indiscriminate slaughter now took place, the lines were instantly carried, and a very large booty acquired by the soldiers of Nujuff Cooli Khan. The terror excited by this extraordinary attack was so great, that the news being communicated to the main body of the king's army, they were thrown into disorder, and began to prepare for flight; nor did the mischief end there, for, to increase the dismay, just at the moment the lines were carried, Munsoor Khan, who commanded in Gocul Ghur, by a preconcerted agreement

Nujuff Cooli Khan, issued out of the town with a strong detachment, and four pieces of cannon. Having, by a circuitous route, reached the rear of the royal army, he commenced a very heavy fire from his artillery; the confusion in camp now increased tenfold; every thing was uproar, disorder, and dismay. The king himself was, by this manœuvre, exposed to the greatest personal danger, and the royal tents being within range of the shot, many persons about his majesty were killed and wounded. In this distracted state the king was advised to remove with the royal family, (there being at this time six princes in the camp) to the Hera-wul, or advanced guard of the army, which was without the range of the enemy's cannon. To that spot, on the first alarm, Shah Meer Khan had repaired, and was endeavouring by his presence and example to animate and rally the flying troops. The king's tents were accordingly struck, and Shah-Aulum, accompanied by his family, proceeded to the advanced guard. But the misfortune was now happily remedied by the magnanimity and gallantry of Begum Somroo. That spirited woman was encamped to the right of the line; her force remained entire, unaffected by the general panic, and stood ready in dressed ranks. On perceiving the extreme confusion that reigned throughout the line, he bravely resolved, by a personal effort, to prevent the king's disgrace; he sent a respectful message to his majesty, desiring him to repair to her quarters, and assured him of her determined resolution to punish the rebel, or perish in the attempt. At the same time, she, on the field, wrote a short note, which she dispatched to Nujuff Cooli Khan, upbraiding him with his ingratitude towards the king, and threatening him with immediate and exemplary chastisement. The gallant lady* then getting into her palanquin, placed herself at the head of 100 of her own sepoys, accompanied by a six pounder, commanded by an European officer. With this detachment she proceeded to the spot occupied by Munsoor Khan, and advancing upon the rebel with much spirit, she commanded her palanquin to be set down, and ordered her artillery to charge with grape shot; a well directed fire from the gun, assisted by volleys of small arms from the sepoys, soon had the desired effect. Munsoor Khan, astonished at this sudden and unexpected check, began to give ground, and having lost numbers of his men, he retreated with precipitation under the walls

*MS Narrative of Syud Rezzi Khan.

of the fort. The king's troops having now time to breathe, were rallied, under the direction of Himmud Behadur and Shah Meer Khan; most of them having rejoined their standards, attacked the enemy in their turn with great spirit, when after a short, but desperate, conflict, Nujuff Cooli Khan was compelled to retire, but not before the gallant Shah Meer Khan had fallen, pierced by a musket ball. His loss was sincerely and deservedly regretted by the king and the whole army. Oider being once more restored, the king directed his tents to be pitched, which done, he bethought of bestowing a suitable reward to the gallant female who had preserved him from imminent destruction. Having sent for her to the Durbar, in the warmest terms he praised her gallantry, and thanked her for the service she had that day rendered him; he clothed her in a magnificent vest, and, in addition to her former titles, honoured her with the appellation of "his most beloved daughter". It was, indeed, by all acknowledged, that the intrepidity manifested by the Begum on so trying an occasion, merited the most honourable reward; to her courage and resolution was owing, not only the safety of the army, but her sovereign's life.

Nujuff Cooli Khan, dispirited by his late defeat, now condescended to talk in a more humble strain, and being well acquainted with the influence of Begum Somroo at court, he endeavoured to avail himself of her good offices to plead his pardon with the king; he declared his sincere contrition for his late intemperate conduct, and offered, as an atonement, a larger sum of money than what he had before promised, with professions of fidelity in future. The king, desirous of repose from the fatigues of the field, was not unwilling to listen to these solicitations, and in a few days a pardon was made out for the rebel chief, and he was received at court. The money agreed on having been paid into the royal treasury, his majesty returned with the army to Delhi.

We must now return to Ismael Beg, who was still employed on the siege of Agra when he received the alarming intelligence of the approach of the Marhattas.

Sindiah, who as before observed, had re-entered the Doo Ab, having, in the course of his route, recovered several fortresses under the Mogul chiefs, and reduced them to obedience, resolved to hazard a general action for the recovery of his

authority. For this purpose, he first sent forward his favourite general, Ranah Khan, with 6000 select cavalry, and brought up the remainder of his army in person, they advanced by easy marches towards the city of Agra. Ismael Beg, previous to their arrival, had strengthened himself by engagement with Gholaum Caudir Khan, and if both parties had abided by the compact, it is probable their united force would have defeated the Marhatta army, and destroyed the hopes of Sindiah; but unfortunately for Ismael Beg, his versatile associate, at this important crisis, deserted him, and, actuated either by caprice or treacherous design, marched away with his whole force, just as the Marhatta army appeared in sight. Thus abandoned, Ismael Beg did not yield to the dictates of despondency or pusillanimous fear, but resolving, by his own activity and courage to counterbalance the defection of his unworthy colleague; he prepared himself for battle on the 22nd of August, in the current year, under the walls of Agra; a desperate action ensued, and so well was the palm of victory contested, that both parties sustained a very heavy loss, but fortune inclining to the Marhattas, Ismael Beg was compelled to quit the field, and almost alone to cross the river Jumna; he fled to the frontiers of the vizir's territory; —the whole of the camp equipage, treasure, and artillery, fell into the hands of the conquerors; and Ranah Khan, on the ensuing morning, made a triumphant entry into Agra; which surrendered, after sustaining a siege of upwards of a year.

This victory, the complete that had been gained by the contending parties for many years, ensured the ascendancy of the Marhatta authority; and had Ranah Khan availed himself of the general panic which it excited; lie might have taken immediate possession of Delhi. That step would have entirely defeated the ambitious intrigues of the Mogul nobility, and prevented the degradation and disgrace of the unfortunate Shah-Aulum. But previous to entering into this melancholy detail, it will be necessary to recur to the situation of the fugitive chief, Ismael Beg, and of Gholaum Caudir Khan.

Scarcely had the latter chief quitted his associate, when he repented of his perfidy and would have returned to his assistance but it was too late; he learnt the news of his total defeat by Ranah Khan, and finding his force insufficient to make head against the Marhattas, he deemed it for the present more prudent

to decline a contest.—Quitting the neighbourhood of Agra, he suddenly appeared before the fort of Ali Ghur, a place then garrisoned by Sindiah's troops;—by a vigorous assault he carried the fort, and obtained a considerable booty; after leaving a body of his own men in the place, he took the road to Delhi.

It was at this period that Gholaum Caudir first formed his resolution to strike a decisive blow; he saw the supineness of the Marhatta army, and the defenseless state of the capital, and being totally void of principle, and heedless of consequences, he formed and executed the bold design of plundering the imperial palace, and dethroning his sovereign. In order to facilitate the accomplishment of his plan, he previously sent letters to his former colleague, Ismael Beg, in which, after many apologies for his late behaviour towards that chief, he faithfully promised for the future to share his fortunes. To excite his compliance, he laid open the proposed method of accomplishing this daring enterprise, and tempted his avaricious spirit with the hopes of rioting in the hidden wealth and treasures which were said to be deposited within the royal palace. To these proposals, however nefarious, Ismael Beg, though at the expense of his honour, scrupled not to yield a ready assent. He accordingly quitted the place of his retirement, and shortly after arrived in the camp of Gholaum Caudir. He was received with every mark of cordiality and respect, and the two chiefs, after making a suitable arrangement of their force, commenced their march towards the capital.

A Marhatta garrison, under the command of Himmut Behadur, still occupied the fort and city of Delhi. Budel Beg Khan, Solemaun Beg, and other lords, were also at this time about the king. The conspirators, on their arrival at the eastern bank of the river Jumna, opposite to the palace, dispatched a messenger to court, demanding, in insolent and threatening terms, an immediate admission to the royal presence. Shah-Aulum, who was well acquainted with the perfidious dispositions of these chiefs, resolutely refused them entrance, and relying on the fidelity and attachment of his nobles, hoped, by their exertions, to defeat the traitors' machinations.—But, alas, how miserably was the unfortunate prince deceived! Those very men, instigated by the detested policy of the Nazir, entered closely into the views of the rebel chiefs, and, forgetful of the confidence and beneficent

attention of their king, during a series of thirty years, they hesitated not to abandon him in the hour of his distress. To this defection was added, likewise, that of Rajah Hilmut Behadur, who, by a disgraceful and precipitate retreat from his post, sullied his reputation as a soldier and his loyalty as a subject.

Shah-Aulum was thus left in a defenceless state; and every obstacle being removed, Gholaum Caudir Khan and his wicked associate proceeded to the perpetration of their atrocious design. Two thousand Rohillas accompanied the traitors; on their arrival at the palace, they were met by the Nazir, who introduced them into the king's presence. Gholaum Caudir and Ismacel Beg, placing themselves on each side of the throne, performed the customary reverence. Gholaum Caudir then represented to his majesty, that, forced by the machinations of his enemies, who had flandered his reputation by calumnious charges, he had come to vindicate himself in the presence.

Shah-Aulum, in reply, declared himself satisfied with the conduct of Gholaum Caudir in every point of view; and in testimony of his esteem, embraced the traitor. It was then hinted to the king, that the hour for his usual repast being arrived, it would be proper for his majesty to retire into the Haram. On his majesty's departure, the chiefs, who remained in the audience chamber, entered into close debate on the execution of their plot. Agreeably to the advice of the Nazir, the treasurer of the household, Seetul Doss, was directed to repair to the king, and acquaint him of the necessity which existed of a prince of the royal family being immediately appointed to attend the army in a progress through the provinces; that Gholaum Caudir would charge himself with the conduct of the war against the Marhattas, and that, as a pledge for his own honour and safety, the command of the citadel and garrison should be immediately delivered up to such persons as he might choose to nominate. In order, however, to quiet the king's apprehensions, and evince the sincerity of his own intentions, the crafty Rohilla with his own hand framed a treaty, in which, as a return for the confidence that was reposed in him, the traitor solemnly swore to defend the person and interests of the king against all opposition.

The treaty being properly signed, Sectul Doss carried it to the outward inclosure of the Haram, where it was delivered to an

attendant, who conveyed it to his majesty. The king having perused it, the treasurer was called in. That nobleman, faithful to his king, frankly told him that no reliance could be placed on the notorious perfidy of the Rohilla chief. He mentioned the cabals of the rebels in terms sorrowful and indignant; and, as a testimony of his own loyalty, he offered to return and put Gholaum Caudir Khan to instant death. To induce a compliance with his request, the treasurer urged that there was still a sufficient force within the palace to support the act, and expel the traitor's troops. But the king, by some unaccountable insatuation, refused his sanction to the deed, though it was the only probable means of extricating himself from his perilous situation. He rejected the proposal, and directed the treasurer to return to the rebels, and acquaint them with his acquiescence to the terms of the treaty.

Meanwhile great numbers of the Rohillas who had entered the palace, penetrated in a tumultuous and disorderly manner into every part; nor were any steps taken by their chiefs to repel the outrages they committed. Shah-Aulum, informed of the circumstance, came forth from the Haram, and going to the audience chamber, requested of Gholaum Caudir that he would, after placing the proper sentinels within the fort, order the remainder of his troops to withdraw. The traitor professed obedience, but had no sooner reached the outer gate of the fort, than, instead of making the proposed arrangement, he gave the signal for the remainder of his guards to enter, which they instantly did; and in a few moments, the fort and palace, as well as the adjoining fort of Selim Ghur, were in possession of the rebels.

The king's guards were now disarmed, and their officers put into close confinement. This additional insult being reported to the king, he directed an attendant to go to Gholaum Caudir, and in strong terms to remonstrate and reproach him for his conduct — “The ink*”, said the unhappy monarch, “with which the solemn treaty was written is scarce yet dry, when he breaks his faith”. The remonstrance proved of no avail; for the rebel having confined every person who might be able to assist the king, proceeded to the perpetration of additional indignities. Entering armed into the audience chamber, he insolently demanded assign-

*MS. narrative of Syud Rezzi Khan.

ments for the payment of his troops, who were then clamorous for their arrears. The king in vain pleaded his total inability to afford any relief, but told the rebel to seize upon whatever he thought proper within the precincts of the palace. After much altercation, and a disgraceful scene, the unfortunate Shah-Aulum was permitted to return to his Haram, to ruminate on his miserable and degraded state.

The plan now approached its termination. Early on the ensuing morning, the rebels in concert, at the head of a numerous band of followers, well armed, entered the audience chamber where Shah-Aulum was sitting. Completely surrounding the throne, they sternly commanded the princes of the royal family who were present to retire within the Haram.—They obeyed.—Gholam Caudir then dispatched a messenger to the fort of Selim Ghur, which is contiguous to the palace, to bring forth Beedar Shah, a son of the late emperor Ahumud Shah. The traitor then approached the throne, and took up the shield and scymetar, which, as emblems of royalty, were placed on cushion before the king : These he consigned to the hands of an attendant, and turning towards Shah-Aulum, sternly commanded him to descend; “Better, said the aged monarch, far better will it be for Gholam Caudir to plunge his dagger in my bosom, than load me with such indignity;” the Rohilla, frowning, put his hand to his sword, but the Nazir at the instant, stepping up, prevented him from drawing it. With unblushing effrontery he then turned towards his sovereign, and audaciously told him, that resistance being vain, he would do well to comply with the traitor’s demand. Abandoned by all, the king then rose from his seat and retired to the Haram, and a few minutes after Beedar Shah made his appearance,—he was saluted by the rebels as emperor of Hindostan, under the title of Jehaun Shah, and the customary Nazis having been presented, the event was proclaimed to the citizens of Delhi by the sound of trumpets and the acclamations of the populace.

In return for these important services, the new king delivered to Gholam Caudir an order upon the revenues for thirtysix lacks of rupees, a grant in appearance considerable, but, in fact, of no real value, as the distracted state of the country, occasioned by the late disturbances, had totally dried up every source of revenue or emolument, and the usurper, though declared sole manager

of affairs, could hope to procure wealth only by extortion. The family of the dethroned king were now directed to retire within the fort of Selim Ghur, and those of Jchaun Shah to occupy their apartments in the palace. Jchaun Shah, however, too soon found himself an idle pageant in the hands of his pretended friends. On applying to Gholam Caudir to accompany him on a visit to the great cathedral, to receive the royal investiture with the accustomed solemnity in the eyes of the people, the tyrant answered, that the time proper for such ceremony was not yet come, and that business of greater moment first demanded his attention; in the meantime great distress prevailed within the walls of the Haram, and the cries of females were heard aloud.

The next step taken by the rebellious chiefs, was to send a party of soldiers to the palace of the two aged princesses, Maleka Zimani, and Sahiba Mahal. These ladies were the widows of the deceased emperor Mahmud Shah, and had, for more than twenty years, lived in a manner entirely secluded from the world. As they were known, not only to be very rich, but to possess considerable influence over the royal family, they were now ordered to court, and, on their arrival directed to visit the Haram, and persuade the females there confined, quietly to deliver up their jewels and valuable effects. The office was invidious,

Some persons in Delhi have not scrupled to affirm, that the princesses refused compliance with the order, and pleaded their advanced age and high rank as reasons for declining the office; but, on the other hand, they are accused of having encouraged the usurper, and to have endeavoured, by intrigue, to form a secret treaty to raise to the throne a relation of their own. Certain it is they visited the Haram, but without the success expected, and on their return, declined farther interference; this conduct contributed only to exasperate the tyrant. With inhuman rapacity he caused those venerable ladies to be robbed of all their property which the benevolence of the emperor, in more prosperous days, had bestowed upon them, and they were afterwards commanded to retire to their own habitation.

The thirty-six lacs of rupees, as before stated, not coming into the treasury, Gholam Caudir insolently threatened the new king with his severe displeasure, and added, in terms sarcastically poignant, that as he had elevated him to his present

dignity, he could, with equal facility, deprive him of it. Perceiving the tyrant's drift, Jchaum Shah retired into the Haram, and having, partly by menaces and alternate soothings, constrained the unhappy women to deliver up their jewels and ornaments, and other valuables, he sent them in trays to Gholam Caudir. The royal family were, by this means, reduced to great distress; the cries within the Haram became much louder, and their sufferings more acute; and with sorrow we relate, that to so high a pitch was it carried, that some of the inferior order of females actually perished for want, or urged by the bitterness of despair, raised their hands against their own lives. Insensible to the general distress, and unsatiated with plunder, Gholam Caudir Khan finding he had nothing more to expect from the new king, proceeded to the last act of wanton cruelty. He sent for the dethroned king and all the princes of the royal family to the audience chamber; on their arrival, he sternly commanded Shah Aulum to discover his concealed treasures; in vain did the king plead his degraded state, and the consequent inability to conceal even the smallest article. Inflamed by a continual debauch, which had thrown him into a paroxysm of rage, the tyrant threatened his sovereign with instant loss of sight; What! exclaimed the suffering prince, (We quote the literal expressions of a native author*) What! will you destroy those eyes, which for a period of sixty years have been assiduously employed in perusing the sacred Koran?"

Regardless of the pathetic appeal, the Rohilla, with characteristic inhumanity, commanded his attendants to seize the king. Having thrown him on the floor, the ferocious ruffian implanting himself on his bosom, transfixed with a poignard the eyes of his venerable sovereign! on the completion of this horrid deed, Gholaum Caudir ordered the king to be removed to distant apartment. The miserable Shah-Aulum, pale and bleeding, was conducted to his retreat; there, in all the bitterness of anguish, to contemplate on his now ruined fortunes. Emphatic, indeed, were the expressions of the same native author in relating the fallen condition of his sovereign; "This wretch," (exclaims the indignant historian) "this accursed wretch, has, in one fatal moment, darkened the bright star of the august Timoorian family, and buried in the whirlpool of destruction the stately vessel of imperial authority." The king, however, evinced, under such accumu-

lated misfortunes, a firmness of mind, and resignation highly honourable in his character; and it may not be unworthy to remark, that the natives of Asia in general, probably, from the principles of predestination which they imbibe from their youth, are observed to sustain themselves under misfortune, in a manner worthy of imitation by the European Christian.

Shah-Aulum surviving the loss of his sight during his confinement, solaced himself in contemplative reveries, and in composing elegiac verses, descriptive of his deplorable state.*

But from such heart-rending scenes, let us hasten to relate the remaining actions of this execrable monster. His next victim was the infamous Nazir. This man, through whole disloyalty and ingratitude Gholaum Caudir had been enabled to perpetrate his atrocities, now most deservedly experienced the effects of his perfidious conduct. He was directed by the tyrant to give in an inventory of his property and effects, and on refusing to comply, he was seized and put into close confinement, when his ill-gotten wealth was forcibly taken from him, thus exhibiting to the world an exemplary instance of retributive justice for his demerits.

As Gholaum Caudir's wealth accumulated, his avarice rose to a proportionate degree; and blind to the impolicy of such a step, he refused to make an equal division of the spoil with his guilty associate. Ismaeel Beg, incensed at this treatment, resolved to abandon him. He accordingly withdrew his guards from the palace, and retired to his own house. From thence he dispatched letters to the Marhatta general, acknowledging his errors, and offering to atone for them by professions of future obedience and fidelity, and declaring his readiness to join the Marhattas in any measures toward the tyrant's expulsion.

The supineness of the Marhatta government during the late disgraceful transactions, has been deservedly reprobated, and is difficult to be accounted for on any principle of policy or advantage to the state. Indeed, the unhappy monarch, from a strange combination of circumstances, seems to have been forsaken by all his friends when he most needed their assistance; and it is much to be regretted that the state of British politics at that time did not admit of interference on the part of his old and, till now faithful allies.

Sindiah, when informed of the late tragical events, ordered his general, Ranah Khan, to march forthwith to Delhi, expel the traitor, and liberate Shah-Aulum from his confinement. These orders were obeyed with a willing alacrity on the part of Ranah Khan; and he exerted himself with so much diligence, that the van of the Marhatta army was in sight of the capital, when Gholaum Caudir Khan, awakened from his dream of riot and intemperance, received the first tidings of the enemy's approach. Finding his situation in the imperial palace to be untenable, he prepared for flight; but previous to his departure, he collected the plunder, and taking the new king along with him, with all the prinees of the royal family, together with the infamous Nazir, he quitted the fort by a private passage, and crossing the river Jumna, effected his retreat to Meerut, a town in the eentre of the Doo Ab, and distant about sixty miles from Delhi.

On the flight of Gholaum Caudir, the Marhatta general advanced, and took possession of the city and palace. His first care was to release the deethroned king, cause him to be proclaimed in Delhi, and furnish him with everything necessary for his convenience or comfort. Ranah Khan having then placed a strong garrison in the citadel, immediately set out in pursuit of the rebel chief. Previous, however, to that step, he, by order of Sindiah, afforded Ismaael Beg a liberal supply of money for the payment of his discontented soldiers; and directed that chief to proceed to the districts of Rewari and Gocul Ghur, whence he was commanded to expel Nujuff Cooli Khan, who had beheld with indifference the late enormities at Delhi.

These arrangements being finished, Ranah Khan crossed the Jumna. On his second day's march, he was joined by a Marhatta chief, named Ali Behadur, who had for some time past been employed in Bundelcund,* and now brought with him a body of 4000 horse in support of the general cause. The united force then proceeded to Meerut, which was garrisoned by a strong force of Rohillas, who still adhered to the tyrant's cause. Ranah Khan, not having any heavy artillery, was prevented from forming a regular siege; he therefore drew a line of circumvalation around, and blockaded the fort. This mode would, he apprehended, compel the garrison to a surrender, by the supplies from without being

*A province to the south-west of Allahabad.

completely cut off; nor was he deceived in the expectation; for a dearth of provisions ensuing, the Rohillas began to sustain great inconvenience. Gholaum Caudir endeavoured, by repeated salutes, to animate his troops, and repel the besiegers. In every encounter the intrepid chief exhibited a gallantry and resolution that would have done honour to a better cause. But finding all his efforts fruitless, and the garrison having now become mutinous, he determined to attempt an escape.

Attended by 500 horse, who were still attached to him, he, at their head, rushed out of the fort, and charged the enemy so vigorously, that though every endeavour was exerted to take him prisoner, he made his way through the whole line, and accomplished his escape. But, at length, his own troops perceiving his forlorn condition, began by degrees to drop off; so that in a short time he was left quite alone; and, to complete his mishap, his horse, exhausted by fatigue, sunk under him, and he received in the fall a severe contusion. This accident compelled him to take refuge in an adjoining village, where, being recognised by the Zemindar of the place, he was seized, and put into confinement. Information of this circumstance having been conveyed to Ali Behadur, that chief sent a party of horse, who conducted him into the Marhatta camp. On the rebel's flight from Meerut, the garrison surrendered at discretion. Their lives were spared, and the princes of the royal family were released from their confinement, and under an honourable escort conveyed to Delhi. On their arrival, Jehaun Shah, after suffering severely for his short-lived elevation, was remanded back to his former abode in the fort of Selim Ghur.

On the reduction of Meerut, Ranah Khan led his army to Sehaurunpore, which place, on hearing the fate of Gholaum Caudir, submitted to the Marhatta authority, who, from that time, have remained undisturbed masters of the whole province.

Soon after this event, Ranah Khan with the army returned to Delhi, where by this time the Maharajah Sindiah was likewise arrived, and had resumed his former authority in the state. The punishment of the rebel was too remarkable to be passed over in silence; nor did his guilty associate, the Nazir, escape the just vengeance of his insulted sovereign.

Gholaum Caudir, on his arrival in the Marhatta camp, was carried into the presence of the general; when, after repeated

demands to discover the place where he had deposited the plunder of the palace, on his refusing to comply, he was delivered over to a punishment terrible indeed. He was first placed in an iron cage, constructed for the occasion, and in this situation was suspended in front of the army. After sustaining the insults and indignities of the soldiers, his nose, ears, hands, and feet were cut off; and in this mutilated and miserable condition he was, by order of Ali Behadur, sent off to Delhi; but, on the journey, death relieved the miserable wretch from his sufferings; thus dreadfully atoning for the crimes of his savage and abandoned life!—The Nazir, on his arrival at Delhi, was trodden to death under the feet of an elephant.

The melancholy events passing so rapidly in review, whilst relating the transactions of an Asiatic Durbar, can afford to a benevolent mind little to contemplate with pleasure or attention; but the picture, however disgusting, may notwithstanding be viewed to advantage. A British reader might, on this review, direct his inspection inwards, and while he execrates the insatiate spirit and detestable ambition which can thus actuate men to the commission of such enormities, he may place before his fatigued mind and more pleasing contrast of the situation and invaluable blessings of his native land—blessings, which teach him more highly to value and to venerate that happy constitution, which is founded upon an immutable and immortal principle, that a British sovereign can do no wrong.

Soon after the arrival of the Marhatta army, Sindiah appointed a day for reinstating the deposed king on the throne of his ancestors; and the ceremony was performed in the grand hall of audience with much pomp and solemnity. An allowance was, moreover, assigned to his majesty of nine lacs of rupees per annum for the support of his family and household, the superintendance of which was committed to Shah Nizam Al Deen, a dependant on the Marhatta chief.*

*Whatever might have been the real intentions of Sindiah when he made this grant, in appearance so liberal, it cannot be denied but his kindness failed to effect; and it may be affirmed with justice, that from the character which this chief originally assumed of protector of the injured rights of the Great Mogul, he, in fact, became the oppressor. Intent only on his own aggrandisement, and in effectuating his plans at the Poonah Durbar, the Marhatta chief detained the unhappy king in an apparently honourable, but

After the terrible punishment of Gholaum Caudir Khan, the order of our narrative leads to the situation of Ismael Beg. That nobleman, as already observed, had been detached by order of Sindiah to reduce Nujuff Cooli Khan, at that time in the neighbourhood of Rewari. On his arrival in the district, Ismael Beg was informed of the death of his antagonist, whose troops were then under the command of his widow, a woman of masculine spirit and unbounded ambition. Well acquainted with the active bravery of Ismael Beg, the Begum proposed to him a coalition of interests; and, to excite his hopes of success in a resistance to the Marhatta authority, she proffered him the forces and treasures of her deceased lord. The natural and hereditary aversion entertained by Ismael Beg against the Marhatta nation, inclined him, without much reflection, to accede to these proposals. He accordingly marched his own force to the town of Canoor, the place where the Begum then resided, and which was actually besieged by the Marhattas.

Notwithstanding every exertion on the part of the enemy, he threw himself into the place, and endeavoured by repeated and spirited sallies to prevent its fall. Unfortunately, in one of those encounters, the Begum herself, who with a gallantry and spirit not uncommon among the females of Hindustaun were accustomed to be present in action, was slain by a cannon ball. This misfortune occasioned a defection in her troops to their obedience of Ismael Beg, and which had, during her life time, been kept within proper bounds. The principal leaders entering into a cabal against the Mogul chief, agreed to deliver him up to the Marhattas, with whom

really miserable, confinement; and during his own absence, he delegated his power to a crafty and designing dependant, who permitted the king and his family to want the common necessities of life; a circumstance which inflicts indelible disgrace on Sindiah's memory. This assertion would appear overstrained, and the circumstance, perhaps, too highly coloured, were it not notorious to all Delhi, that out of the above sum allotted in jaghire for the king's maintenance, he has seldom received more than 50,000 rupees per annum, and that frequently ill paid. To be convinced of the truth of this fact, the author, when at Delhi, made particular inquiry, and was assured by a nobleman of the court, Syud Rezzi Khan, Colonel Palmer's Vakeel, that it was an actual fact.—This nobleman resides at the capital on the part of the English Ambassador, as well as that of the Vizir, Asuf Al Dowla, for the purpose of disbursing to his majesty the sum of two thousand rupees per month for his privy purse, (which is termed Zuri Khass,) and this money, together with a few trifling presents received when persons are presented at court, is all the lineal descendant of Timoor obtains for the support of himself and his thirty children, residing within the precincts of the imperial palace.

they had commenced a negotiation. But however secretly the treaty, on this occasion, was made, it soon reached the ears of Ismael Beg; and, he, to prevent the effects of this treachery, was prevailed upon by his friends to a voluntary surrender, requesting only a guarantee for his personal safety. This was readily granted him under the faith of General Duboigne, at that time of high command in the Marhatta army. Some few days after, Ismael Beg entered the camp, from whence he was sent off a prisoner to the fort of Agra, in which state he has since continued. While the Marhatta influence obtains permanency at the court of Delhi, it is probable he will continue under restraint, as that politic and wary people will never suffer so active and intriguing a man to be enlarged. But should any unforeseen event, in the hazardous system of the present politics, occasion a decline, or extinction of their authority, there is little doubt but this active and vigilant partisan will again bear a conspicuous share in the revolutions.

Among the numerous adventurers who have for a series of years emigrated from the regions of the north to the provinces of Hindostan, few have possessed greater military talents than Ismael Beg. Inured to arms at an early period of life under the tuition of his uncle, Mahomed Beg Khan Hamdani, he distinguished himself on several occasions by his superior valour and ability; and if, on a review of his character, we except the culpability justly attached to him for the share he bore in the transactions of Gholaum Caudir, we must allow Ismael Beg the merit of an active, gallant soldier; to which, by the unanimous voice of his contemporaries, may be added that of an accomplished man, generous in disposition, and kind and liberal to his followers and dependants.

Of the fate of the remaining persons who shared in the various revolutions recorded through this volume, the Begum Somroo deserves notice. The fidelity exhibited by this spirited lady in defence of her sovereign on various occasions, merited a better return than that which she was destined to experience. The chiefs in the Marhatta army had long beheld with jealous quietude the influence she had acquired with the king; and Sindiah himself appears not to have been wholly free from this imputation; for, though he cannot be charged with giving directions to degrade the Begum from her dignity, his not taking immediate

steps to make reparation for the affront, must appear to every unprejudiced mind highly to his discredit. On the other hand, it must, with equal impartiality, be confessed, that the conduct of this lady gave her enemies great advantage.

During the whole of her administration, until the period before us, she, by prudence and a circumspect conduct, governed her territory with honour and advantage. Her troops respected her valour, and her officers yielded ready obedience to her authority. An unfortunate attachment, however, which she formed for one of those officers, occasioned her severe vexation and distress; and inconsistently with her usual prudence, she had granted him her hand in marriage. Mr. Vaissaux, a German adventurer, was the person selected; who, though a man of abilities, and who had rendered essential service to the Begum in the management of her artillery and other military concerns, was nevertheless of a haughty disposition and stern manners, which, unfortunately for both, proved the source of a disastrous event.

The Begum was strongly dissuaded from this step by her friends, and by none more than the king, who, in this ill-fated marriage, scrupled not to predict the total downfall of her authority, a prediction too soon to be fulfilled. By the secret instigation of the Marhatta leaders, the chief officers and servants of the Begum entered into a conspiracy, and resolved on her deposition.— To give a sanction to their proceedings in the eyes of the people, they invited the Nuwaub Zaffer Yab Khan, son of the deceased Somroo, by a former wife, to accept of the government as his just inheritance. This young man, turbulent in manners, and of a worthless character, had received, through the bounty of the Begum, an ample allowance for his support, ever since his father's death; but his conduct had given her such disgust, that she had forbidden his appearance at her own residence. He was living at Delhi when the offer of the conspirators arrived, undisturbed by any scruples of conscience, and not impressed by any sentiment of gratitude or affection, he accepted the offer with avidity, and repairing to the town of Sirdhauna, in private, he waited the event with impatience.

A few days subsequent to the Begum's marriage, she prepared to accompany her husband in a circuit through her Jaghire.

They had scarcely quitted the town of Scrdhauna, when a mutiny broke out among her own troops, and at the same instant, Zuffer Yab Khan, who had been privately living in the town, now rushed forth with a body of Marhattas, seized on the town, and was proclaimed Jaghirc Dar. Informed of this event, the Begum endeavoured, by the most studied attention and cogent argument to induce her troops to return to their allegiance, but in vain; long resolved on their plan, they were heedless of her solicitations and scized and confined both herself and husband. This unfortunate man perceiving himself in the power of his enemies, and disdaining submission, in a fit of desperation put a period to his existencce; and the Begum was then reconducted to her capital, only to behold the rebellion of her subjects, and the elevation of her ungenerous relative, to the Musnud.*

After the settlement of the Government at Delhi, Sindiah directed his attention to the subjugation of the different Rajpoot states, who, during the late disturbances and frequent revolutions, had become, in a great measure, independent of the court. In this arduous undertaking he was assisted by the professional abilities of an European officer of distinguished eminence, Mr. Duboigne, a gentleman formerly in the service of the East-India Company, had, of late years, upon advantageous offers being made to him, entered into that of Sindiah, and on many occasions had contributed to the ascendancy acquired by that prince over his competitors. Mr. Duboigne, whose acuteness and penetration enabled him to discern the vast superiority which discipline obtains over irregular multitudes, and the advantages to be derived from the introduction of European tactics, proposed to Sindiah to raise a body of troops, cloathed and disciplined, as far as the local and religious prejudices would admit, after the model of the company's European troops. The proposal was

readily accepted on the part of the Marhatta chief, and Mr. Duboigne, who had been raised to the rank of general, prepared to carry it into effect.

In the course of the current year,* the first regular brigade ever attached to the Marhatta service, was raised, cloathed and appointed; it consisted of ten battalions of 750 men each, seven of which battalions were reglars, denominated by the natives, *Talingas*, cloathed and armed with musket and bayonet, like the company's troops.—The three remaining battalions were Patans, armed with matchlocks of a new invention; their uniform made after the Persian fashion, and the whole brigade regulars, as well as matchlocks, were exercised by the manual word of command, as practised in European armies. To render the brigade more compact, 500 Mewatis, or irregular soldiers, were attached to perform the ordinary routine of camp duties, so that the troops might be ready, on all occasions, for active service—500 cavalry were attached to the brigade, and 60 pieces of well-mounted and well-served artillery, from 3 to 6 and 9 pounders.

In the succeeding years of 1791-2-3, the second and third brigades were gradually raised of nearly equal force, with the addition of 1000 Rohillas, for the express purpose of leading the storming parties.—The force thus raised amounted, in the whole, to 24,000 men and 130 pieces of artillery, commanded by European officers of different nations, and directed by the enterprizing spirit and unremitting perseverance of the general who raised them. Their success on a variety of the most trying occasions proved equal to their expectations, and Sindiah confessed his obligations to Mr. Duboigne, by reposing in him a confidence almost unlimited, and by the cession of fifty-two districts in the Doo Ab, to be appropriated expressly as Jaiedad, for the maintenance of the troops he had raised. Aided by his exertions, he, in the period we have mentioned, not only recovered his former possessions, but in the end extended his influence to the Punjab frontier; by a rapid succession of victories, he defeated the Nuwaub Ismael Beg, Gholaum Caudir Khan, the countries of Oudepore and Jondpore, and Jynaghur; and though he could not

* The following detail was obligingly communicated to the author by General Duboigne himself, who is now in England, and to whom he begs leave to offer his very hearty acknowledgements.

absolutely wrest these dominions from the last mentioned prince, he compelled him to the payment of an annual tribute.

Towards the middle of 1793, his affairs calling him to the west of India, he left Gopaul Row, his lieutenant-general, to manage his affairs in the north, and General Duboigne in the center of his newly-acquired possessions. His power may, at this period, be said to have reached its meridian splendour; his arms again acquired an ascendancy over his contemporaries, and he found himself the leader and preponderating chief of the whole Marhatta empire --from the confines of Lahore, to the sea of Cambay; he possessed an authority almost unlimited; while the firmness, energy, and activity, which marked the features of his administration, at the same time shed a bright lustre on his character, in the minds of the princes of Hindostan.

At the close of 1793, Sindiah prepared for his return to the northward, with an intention, as it was supposed, of pushing his arms against the Sicks; all looked forward to the future motions of this enterprizing chief in a state of anxious suspense; but while the different powers were either alarmed by the fear, or excited by the hope, of his appearance amongst them, he was suddenly seized with a distemper, which terminated his existence at the age of 67.

His character has been already delineated by the record of his actions in the preceding pages; in conclusion it may be remarked, that from the incessant perseverance with which he laboured to bring to maturity schemes once formed for his own aggrandizement; had his life been extended, he would, in all probability, have become a formidable antagonist to the interests of Great Britain; whose rulers were not unacquainted with his active spirit or insatiable ambition. He was succeeded in his paternal dominions by his nephew, Dowlat Row, who has not as yet attained any pre-eminence among the princes in the Marhatta states.

The few remaining years of the reign of Shah-Aulum can afford little on which to expatiate or digress. Reduced to dependence on a foreign power for the support of himself and a numerous family, the duration of his life cannot materially alter his situation; the fate of his family, and eventual successor, must remain to be recorded at a future period, but his reign may be more

properly said to close when he sustained the fatal calamity before mentioned. Shah-Aulum, nominal Emperor of Hindustaun, is in his 75th year. His stature tall and commanding, his aspect dignified and majestic. The ravages of time are discernible on his face, and the recollection of his misfortunes have impressed his features with melancholy. His early youth was passed in spirited, though ineffectual, struggles, to restore the diminished lustre of imperial authority, and his conduct, whilst contending against the usurped power of Gazooddeen Khan, deserves great praise. But in the greater part of his life, little can be found deserving the applause of posterity. Irresolute and indecisive in his measures, he too frequently rendered useless the plans formed by his friends for the recovery of his authority, while his excessive love of pleasure, and insatiate attachment to unworthy favorites, contributed to degrade him in the eyes of his neighbours and allies, and render the small remains of his dominion contemptible. All his ministers, with the exception of Nujuff Khan, were prodigal and rapacious in the extreme; they perceived the king's weakness, and, by flattering his vanity and supplying his extravagance, ensured to themselves an uncontrolled authority in the state, while they abused the generosity of their sovereign, by committing every species of enormity and oppressive violence.

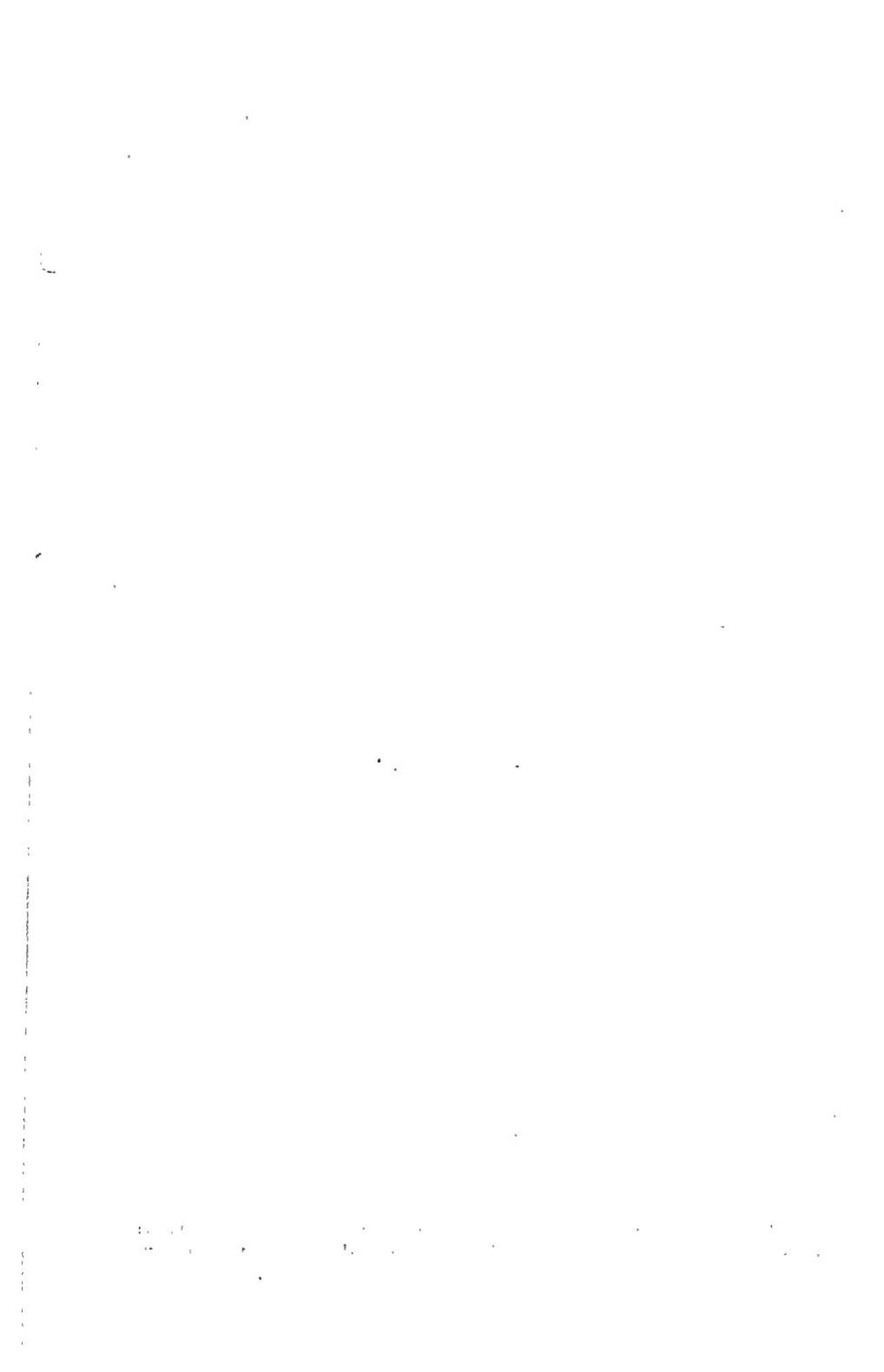
Shah-Aulum had improved a very good education by study and reflection; he was a complete master of the languages of the east, and as a writer, attained an eminence seldom acquired by persons in his high station. His correspondence with the different princes of the country, during a very long and chequered reign, exhibits proofs of a mind highly cultivated; and if we may judge by an elegiac essay, composed after the cruel loss of his sight, he appears to have great merit in pathetic composition. In the internal economy of his household, he is universally allowed to be an affectionate parent, a kind master, and a generous patron. His trials have been many, and it is earnestly to be hoped the evening of his life may be passed in a peaceful tranquillity; upon a review of his life and actions, it may, without injustice, be pronounced, that though Shah-Aulum possessed not a capacity sufficiently vigorous to renovate the springs of a relaxed government, or emulate his illustrious ancestors; he, notwithstanding, had many virtues commendable in a private station; but he unfortunately reigned at a time when the royal authority was in

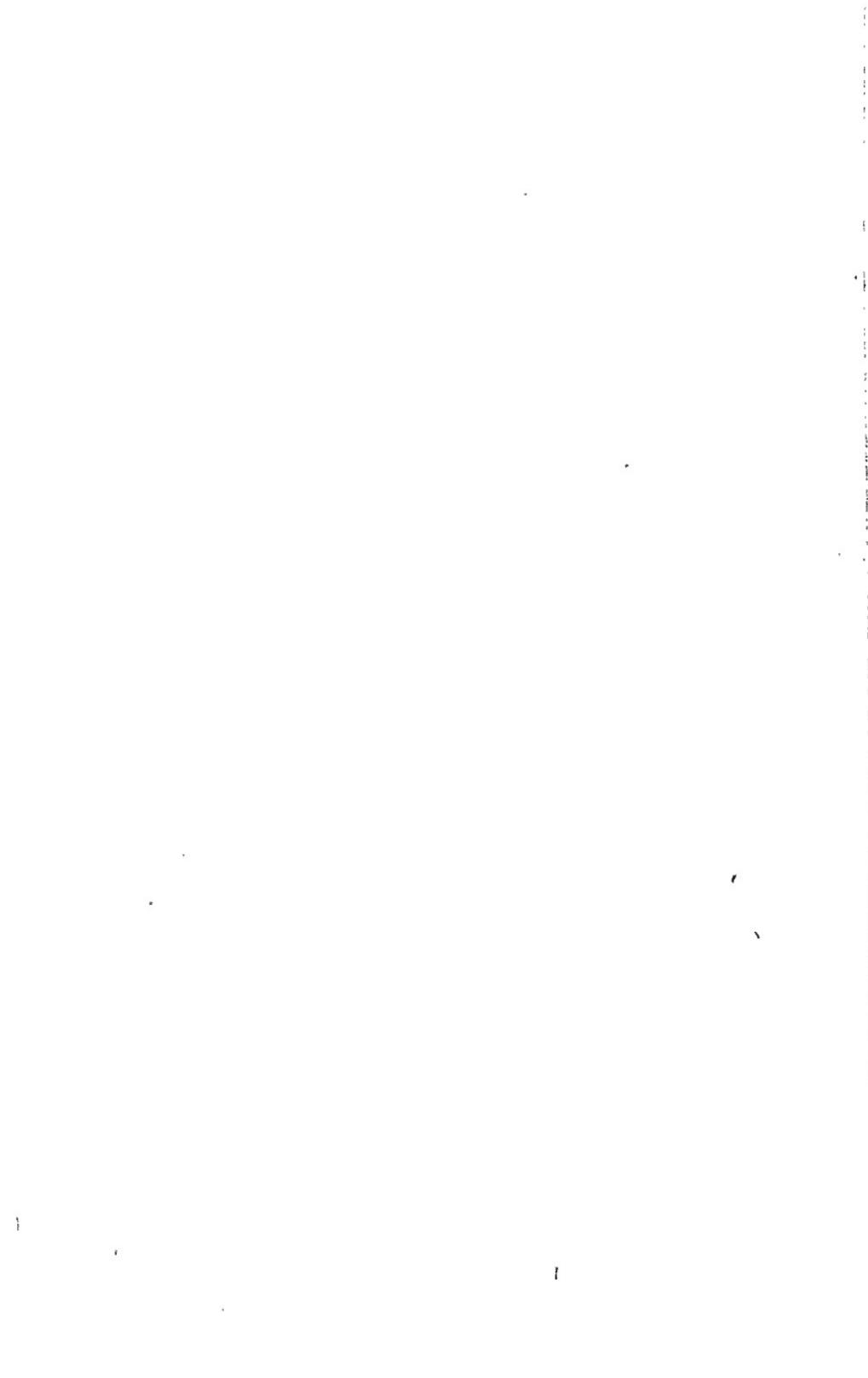
its most degraded state and when great and shining talents were necessary to render permanent his power, and curb the licentious effusions of rebellious and disobedient subjects. The *Sun of Timoor*, as a respectable historian* has justly observed, is most probably set for ever; and if a continuation of the metaphor be allowable, it may be added, that the decline and utter extinction of that august family was reserved to the days of the unfortunate Shah-Aulum.

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* Captain Jonathan Scott, from whose history of Deccan the author is happy to acknowledge he has received considerable advantage, in elucidating the intricacies of dates under which oriental writers so constantly labour.





History - Later Mughals

Later Mughals - History

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